The phenomenological method is not the diametric opposite of the ontological;
it is a more comprehensive one than the latter,
whose merits it preserves and whose inadequacies it tries to remedy.

Leslie Dewart

Posthuman

Theological Reflections

Allan M. Savage, D. Litt.

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ISBN: 978-0-9733882-8-2
Manufacturer: Kindle Direct Publishing
Author's Web Page: http://site-1727391-1843-9198.strikingly.com/

TO THE HESITANT PHILOSOPHER

If philosophy's myths to philosophy's truth,

Pros and cons with right and wrong,

Traditionalism, existentialism and hidden wonder,

If wisdom, Gnosticism and things unknown;

In all their human thought retold,

But not exactly in the ancient way,

Can please, as in my day,

The wiser youngsters of to-day:

– So be it, and read on!

If not; If studious youth no longer craves,

That ancient light recast,

Plato, Aristotle and Thomas of Aquino,

Spinoza, Kant, Hegel and Heidegger.

– So be it. And may we,

In all our ignorance share the grave,

Where these and all their musings lie!

(With a tip o' the hat to Robert Louis Stevenson)

EXAMINERS' REPORT: Date: 1 July 2010 Reference: ASOl/07/20lO
Student: Allan Maurice Savage Degree: Doctor of Letters

The candidate presented a portfolio of publications for assessment accompanied by a critical commentary in line for the regulations for the degree entitled "Interdisciplinary Insights Applied within a Theological Context". The portfolio was extremely wide-ranging and included work principally in the area of theology and secondarily in the areas of philosophy and psychology.

[*The list of previously granted credentials at degree level has been omitted*.]

In addition to previous degree awards and ministerial appointments, the portfolio contained two testimonials from the Bishop of Algoma attesting to his appreciation and high regard for the candidate's work in ministry.

[*The list of publications books, booklets and articles for evaluation has been omitted*.]

The evidence of achievement in line with the Regulations for the granting of the degree of Doctor of Letters by published work was amply displayed. The high level and scope of the work undertaken was clearly evidenced and offered a contribution to scholarship that was both original and unusually broadly-based. It was clear that the candidate had thoroughly absorbed the corpus of existing thought in his chosen areas, and had shown himself to be both a cogent expositor of the scholarship of others and an original thinker in his own right.

The candidate supplied a detailed exegesis in his critical commentary that considered each submitted work in turn. The examiners greatly appreciated the role of this approach in clarifying the intentions, methodology and context of the works concerned. The candidate also included a list of the libraries which have acquired at least one of his books. He concludes that "their acceptance tells me they determined that my books "have something to say" of academic value to the university community and perhaps to the civic community at large." The examiners endorse this conclusion and commend the work involved accordingly.

It is invidious and necessarily subjective to single out examples of particular work in a submission that was uniformly impressive, but the three books "A Phenomenological Understanding of Certain Liturgical Texts: The Anglican Collects for Advent and the Roman Catholic Collects for Lent", "Faith, Hope and Charity as Character Traits in Adler's Individual Psychology with Related Essays in Spirituality and Phenomenology" and "The Ecology: A "New to You" View (An Orthodox Theological Ecology)" were held by the examiners to be of particular merit.

The examiners felt in summary that the submission was of an exemplary quality and reflected exceptional achievement over a sustained period of time. The award of a higher doctorate does not permit the conferral of marks of distinction, but in this case it was felt that the submission was such as to have merited this accolade were it to have been available.

Andrew Linley, D.D. (Convenor)
Vice-President and Director of Administrative Affairs
Percy Dearmer Professor of Liturgical Studies

John Kersey, Hon.LL.D., Hon.D.Mus., D.D., Ed.D., Ph.D.
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Vice- President and Director of External Relations

Prefatory note

This is a book on what I understand to be exploratory of posthuman *philosophy.* It is not a book on posthumanism, but rather interprets the pre-existing philosophical developments that led up to the phenomenon of posthumanity. Posthuman philosophy is a contemporary philosophy that does not rely on the intellectual principles of ancient Greek metaphysics for its foundational principles of knowledge. Classical Western philosophy, i.e. scholasticism, heavily influenced by Hellenistic thought placed emphasis on reason as the distinguishing quality of mind that separated the *human* being from the *animal* being. Without denying reason, phenomenology (a posthuman philosophy) specifies the human being as a self-conscious human agent who directs the evolution of its lived-in environment. By this self-conscious direction of their environment human agents have "surpassed" the humanism of the Renaissance as well as the humanism of the secular Western culture and now stands on the threshold of a new stage of the evolutionary process of human thought, hence the term "posthuman."

In 1966 Leslie Dewart published a book entitled, *The Future of Belief*, containing philosophical ideas sufficiently revolutionary as to attract the attention of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. [Cf. *Contemporary Authors* Vols 9-12, 1st Revision, 226-27 Gale Publishing 1974.] With the benefit of hindsight that book has turned out to be the beginning of my philosophical exploration that has resulted in the publication of this book. Naturally there is more to Dewart's philosophy than has been addressed, either directly or indirectly, by me here. For a full appreciation of Dewart's philosophy, the reader will need to refer to Dewart's corpus of works.

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THE GENESIS OF THIS BRIEF BOOK

I have contended for many years that to understand theological problems one must first understand the related philosophical problems. I began forming this opinion during my undergraduate years when I studied philosophy and was introduced to the theological texts of George Tyrrell (1861–1909). Further, the philosophical perspective of one of my professors at St Michael's College, University of Toronto, Leslie Dewart (1922–2009) contributed significantly to the reform of my convictions. Dewart's understanding of "dehellenization," as a philosophical concept which is not to be understood as the negative, "unhellenization," provided an intellectual opportunity to reflect on my inherited classical understanding. My classical understanding was beginning to present problems and as I probed into the thought of George Tyrrell and Leslie Dewart, I discovered new insights relating to my philosophical and theological thought. In these essays I leave it to the reader to decide whether or not my reflections have clarified or clouded the philosophical issues presented here. It is unfortunate that, at this time in the development of Western religious thought, the place of philosophy in relation to theology seems to have been usurped to a great extent by psychology and sociology. I am sure that contemporary philosophers and theologians are the poorer for it. Poorer philosophers and theologians, notwithstanding, I encourage readers not philosophically inclined, who prefer sociology and psychology, to read on in the hope and discovering new perspectives appropriate to their disciplines.

There is an issue concerning the adequacy of the foundations of our Western philosophy that needs to be re-assessed. It is the accepted, but misunderstood, division within the Hellenic philosophical tradition between *being* and *existence*. Such classical philosophy has died an intellectual death, as

it were, for many philosophers because the cultural environment which gave it birth has died — a cultural death similar to the death of the Latin language. The scientific universe of inanimate material only has taken the place of the philosophical universe with its metaphysical "material." Physical facts, logical and objective relations do not exhaust all of humanity's experience. There are many systems of knowledge by which humanity explores itself but no one system can account for the complexity or totality of the universe. Thus, theologians have need of an appropriate philosophical methodology in order to explain their interpretations of the universe. In modern times the social sciences have evolved to become partners in a philosophical dialogue with theology. The particular methods of the social sciences are taken into account when interpreting religious experience. Posthuman philosophy of a theological type presents a new opportunity for one to undertake a theological self-tutoring to "reach God without God," as it were. (This phrase was coined by Edmund Husserl, 1859-1938.) [1] A purpose within self-tutoring in theology is to assign meaning to one's existence. Theologians continue to offer meaning to human life as they did in ancient (pagan) Greece and as they do in modern (secular) times. In his theological understanding Schillebeeckx (1914-2009) tried

> to show how Aquinas did full justice to the patristic elements, but at the same time how these elements underwent a shift of emphasis in his writings, because of his Aristotelian approach and his sharper insight into the structure of faith. It is always instructive to find out how great theologians went to work in their own time, not in order to imitate them, but so that we may also do, independently, in our own time what they did in theirs. [2]

A brief remark about the phenomenological philosophy that I endorse in these essays. I hold that phenomenological philosophy is a reasoned philosophy, but one that is not necessarily rooted in Greek classical thought. Phenomenological philosophy may be contrasted to scholastic philosophy which I find wanting in its ability to credibly support a posthuman theology. Some contemporary Western theologians continue to rethink the role of theology in the public sphere and its subsequent influence on secular society. In secular society, where religious and spiritual ideas are often

[1] Cf. Stephen William Laycock "Introduction Toward an Overview of Phenomenological Theology" in *Essays in Phenomenological Theology* ed Laycock & Hart, State University of New York Press 1986 (pp. 1-22)
[2] Edward Schillebeeckx (1967) *Revelation and Theology* Sheed and Ward (p. 284)

perceived as needless, although they may be accepted privately as necessary, phenomenological philosophy is able to serve as a credible replacement for Western traditional philosophy for assigning meaning to religious and spiritual experience.

Today, in Western philosophical thinking a shift is taking place from the polemics found in traditional theology to cooperation within the ecumenical study of religion. This shift is occurring phenomenologically and happening on a global scale. Conventional theology, supported by classical philosophy, is shifting to discursive theology supported by a philosophy of a theological type. [3] Many contemporary theologians are seeking to make sense of the personal, but not private experience of the believer. Making sense of a believer's interpretation of experience is frequently expressed in narrative terms, that is, through the telling of one's story of belief and faith commitment. It follows then, that many theologians have their own story to tell. Two such stories are that of the convert George Tyrrell (1861-1909) and more recently that of Charles Davis (1923-1999) — both placed themselves outside the Roman ecclesiastical community.

In his day, and within his particular intellectual climate, George Tyrrell attempted to understand the religious narrative within English Catholicism through his own story of experience and interpretation of revelation. As a theologian his preoccupation with the religious narrative and revelation became a primary focus in his life. His theological legacy has its roots in the Roman Catholic views that were in vogue in the early 20th century, popularly known as Modernism. Tyrrell's way of thinking reflects an ecumenical discursive model of theologizing rather than a polemical model of theologizing. It is through this discursive model of theologizing, I suggest, that one discovers Tyrrell's creative and insightful contribution to the understanding of his Catholic faith.

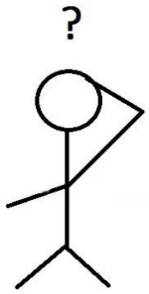
Concerning his quest, I allow Charles Davis to account for himself about his experience within English Catholicism.

[3] I mean what Leslie Dewart called Theological Philosophy in 1969 in *The Foundations of Belief* Herder and Herder (p. 11) "I believe that *Theological Philosophy*, which is my own preference, may be at least as good as any of the more usual expressions, and I hope that this coinage will gain favour and come to fill a useful role in the contemporary Christian academic world."

> I am writing these last lines in the middle of June 1967, not yet six months since I publicly announced my decision. I have done practically no reading directly for this book. For one reason, I have not had the time; for another, I wanted to write it before substantially developing my thought. I wanted to record for myself and for others the state of mind in which I made my break with the Roman Church. … I can see well enough that the fundamental intellectual problems for Christians today are the problems of our knowledge of God in relation to modern philosophy and the question of the uniqueness of Christ in the confrontation with the other world religions. … I have aimed in writing the book to help others. People have turned to me over the years for guidance. I know how much my decision has pained and upset many who looked to me for help in the confused situation in which all Christians now live. I hope they will not think that I have betrayed them. Whether they agree with my final conclusion or not, my desire is that what I have written will give them some understanding of what I have done and a sufficiently positive vision to strengthen their hope in the future of the Christian Church. [4]

Many creative and insightful contributions from *avant-garde* theologians, such as Tyrrell and Davis, are often quoted and discussed by academics and others and yet are soon forgotten within the fog of academic history. Naturally, academic critics truly believe they have understood and correctly expounded the ideas of such unconventional thinkers. And in most cases, they probably have, but not always. Therefore, before the fog of academic history obscures the insights of the unconventional religious philosopher Leslie Dewart (1922-2009) I explore his thought which has inspired the essays in these pages.

[4] Charles Davis (1967) *A Question of Conscience* Hodder and Stoughton (pp.240/241)



A POINT OF DEPARTURE FOR POSTHUMAN THEOLOGY

Introduction

Can phenomenology present a reliable point of departure for posthuman theology, I asked myself? I had been taught, throughout my academic philosophical formation, that classical metaphysics is necessary to Western theology. (Since science, however, is the better approach according to some thinkers, I had wondered, could science be but a different type of philosophy and not only the physical discipline many understood it to be? I concluded that science was no philosophy.) Science notwithstanding, it appears to me that the classical metaphysical attempts seeking to prove that God exists are futile in the contemporary world. These attempts within a metaphysical philosophy at proving God's existence, although rooted in experience but relying on idealism, tell us nothing. The task in a phenomenological theology is not to look for a polemical opportunity to prove that God exists. Rather, the task is to express and clarify the meaning of faith, vis à vis the experience of scripture and tradition.

Posthuman philosophy of a theological type (theological philosophy) leads to the assigning of meaning in an existential situation inherited from the past. Posthuman theological philosophy must deal with the existential anxiety and tension inherited in conventional Christianity. But within this tension there are phenomenological indications for a changed future. These phenomenological indications signal the beginning of a process of dehellenization thus enabling a conscious posthuman theology to be conceived. Posthuman theology has no particular philosophy of its own, but must rely on a philosophy which arises out of the present experience of a community and its

members. Posthuman theology does not rely on an ideology that exists independently of one's experience. Rather, posthuman theology, as a phenomenological theology, has the potential to bring about an end to the antithesis between Rome and the Reformation. Thus, any new Christian outcome may be neither Roman nor Reformed, but reflect an ecumenical philosophical consciousness.

Consciousness and Phenomenological Interpretation

Our times require a posthuman theology to render our Christian experience meaningful. In a posthuman theology I recognize *myself-as-subject* created in God's image and likeness. In traditional Western epistemology, which is not an epistemology of consciousness, this is not entirely possible. In that philosophy I am a creature who acts within my own human sphere. Western epistemology is a philosophy of objectivism in which to know a thing more thoroughly often means to know more about the same thing, i.e., *quantitatively.* In a philosophy of consciousness that supports a posthuman theology, I deepen, heighten or expand my self-understanding *qualitatively*. Since in deepening, heightening or expanding my present self-understanding, an earlier underdeveloped consciousness is presupposed and there are profound theological implications here to do with truth as epistemologically understood.

Within my self-understanding, which means to be conscious, I distinguish between conformity and fidelity. Conformity establishes my relationship to another person, a relationship which I owe to the other person by reason of the nature of the other person. That is, I undertake the will of the other person. Fidelity also establishes my relationship to the other person, a relationship which I owe to myself by reason of my nature. That is, I undertake my will for the sake of the other person. From my experience conformity compels externally, whereas fidelity impels internally.

A philosophy of conscious self-understanding is the means by which I conceptualize my experience. Significantly, human culture is presently understood to be at an ex-animal stage of evolutionary development. Thus, as a human being able, as an ex-animal, to conceptualize God, such conceptualization of God is a religious formulation based on the norms of my present culture.

That is to say, in my experience God is revealed to me not in norms of universal conformity, but in norms of particular fidelity.

In a philosophy of conscious self-understanding (phenomenology) I experience God as that present other (a not-me presence) which when it makes itself felt I become more than I would be, were I not exposed to its influence. To express religiously this, "becoming-more-than-I-would-be-were-I-not-exposed-to-its-influence," experience through self-understanding reflects a posthuman theology. Were it not expressed *religiously*, it might be expressed as a posthuman *psychology.* What needs to be proven to me from argument is not that God *exists*. Rather, what is required is the phenomenal appearance to me of what is not immediately obvious, i.e., God's *presence* to me. As a philosopher and theologian, I must first determine philosophically, and then express theologically, in what sense God is present to me.

Without question, my personality reflects my subjective self at any stage in my evolution. As an adult person, I desire to evolve, that is, direct my evolution beyond my present less-than-perfect self. If I interpret my religious experience through my inherited traditions, I find I am looking to the past and not towards the future and beyond myself. In looking to the past, I recognize God's power over me. Focused on the past, then, I remain a creature with no opportunity to evolve to a future (posthuman) co-creator status given the history of my religious conventions. In a posthuman conscious self-understanding, the God beyond me does not have absolute *power over me* in the conventional sense. Rather, God's *power is shared with me* as a co-creator. That is to say that I may or may not choose to create my own life independently of God's purposes. I have the freedom to choose either path. I can rearrange the physical world (my environment) in ways by which I can serve God so as to realize the *autonomy of my own being*. (I am *homo faber*, not *homo creator*.) Thus, the fundamental relation between God and me consists, not in a hierarchical power relationship of creator-creature, but in a unity of God and me wherein I am a co-creator sharing the divine power. With this realization then, my faith becomes recast and the meaning of religion is expressed in terms that do not imply God's absolute power over me, nor my inordinate submission to God's presence. This means that as a posthuman philosopher and theologian, I do not re-evaluate my ideological origins in order to refresh traditional perspectives. Rather, I re-visit my specific cultural and demographic traditions to establish a conscious self-understanding, that

is, a meaningful posthuman understanding. Through the perspective of a heightened consciousness, a new understanding comes to light within my ideological origins.

Re-visiting my ideological origins can be a negative or a positive experience which affects my theological understanding. Reflecting upon my experience negatively, I may conclude that civilization is dying. Things are not the way they once were. Life is decadent. The Christian moral values that I once acknowledged publicly are challenged within society and often appear as but conflicting opinions. Media headlines suggest to me that world destruction is near given the perpetual state of war and conflict in which the world seems to be engaged. The moral principles that formerly held life together seem to be disintegrating as the traditional supports of my social life are undermined.

A positive reflection, however, shows that the world continues despite my negative experiences. I, like many ordinary persons, am cheerful and optimistic. An ordinary person believes that life is good and he or she feels a part of a larger rhythm of creation despite its apparent chaos. Ordinary people often experience an abundance of the life in which to participate. Often this optimistic attitude is expressed through a spiritual or through a religious life, that is, a vowed life, or perhaps through a respectful secular attitude toward life and creation. Devout people often experience organized religion as one social reality among others and just as philosophical, political and economic realities have characterized human experience throughout the ages. Scholarship and the process of conscious theological interpretation are not ends in themselves, but are means of individual and collective activity. Neither individual nor collective activity produces any universal philosophical system of interpretation. Neither is permanent but only establishes temporary points of view that are contingent upon the cultural context of the thinker.

Social institutions provide a cultural context for the thinker and are the means whereby individuals are able to relate to each other. Family, government, church, agriculture, trade, etc. are examples. The decay or the growth of any one of them will have a corresponding negative or positive affect on the individuals making up that institution. That is to say that theological interpretation based on a conscious self-understanding cannot take place in a self-limiting and self-isolating context

characteristic of decay. Rather, it requires a constructive and supportive context which characterizes human evolution.

To this end a posthuman theology possesses its own special self-conscious evolution with respect to knowledge and human activity. Supported by this conscious self-understanding, posthuman theological interpretation engages emotion, feelings and intuition enabling a transcendent encounter since human consciousness extends beyond sensible experience. A purpose of these essays is to formulate an appropriate process for contemporary Christian theological interpretation thus avoiding the distortions of philosophical ideology, the distortions of fantasy and the distortions of any uncritical "new age" thought. Posthuman theological interpretation presumes that a relationship between God and humanity has taken on the special features of unique personal self-understanding with distinctive philosophical (phenomenological) insights.

Classical Hellenist philosophies were formulated in response to different problems and within a different cultural world. Thus, they reflect the historical experience of the human condition of their time. A posthuman philosophy, to which I subscribe, supports the co-creative evolution of human becoming. Within co-creative evolution each new point of view, or new level of consciousness, humanity transcends any previous philosophical self-awareness. Thus, as co-creator of the universe, humanity is able to structure the order and harmony of the universe with the aid of a phenomenological philosophy, in lieu of an epistemological philosophy.

A RECASTING OF THE ISSUES

After World War I, a new world was born. However, as one author had noted "it is really not a new world, but the old one clearly seen for the first time. But it is a new world for them in which the lines of cleavage were entirely different from what they had seemed to be; a world which seemed cold alien and hostile, yet afterwards appeared to have at least the attraction that discoveries might be made in it and new lessons learned." [5] I know of no better description for the beginning of a posthuman philosophy of consciousness.

A posthuman philosophy of consciousness discloses the practical, or ethical understanding of the presence of God and, as well, acts as a conceptual philosophy. It is not how accurately I conceive these concepts but, rather, how authentically I interpret them and put them into practice. In other words, I am not seeking the truth as an ideal of classical epistemology. Rather, I seek truth as the depth of insight of a practical consciousness. Such a practical depth of insight, or of ethical consciousness reflects the philosophical transition currently taking place in Western culture and society. The beginnings of a philosophy of consciousness are not well understood. I note also that not everyone accepts the phenomenological method of a posthuman philosophy of consciousness as one that clarifies. To many classical scholars the phenomenological method seems to obscure more than clarify. Theologians, who undertake a habit of contemplation, come to understand that there is a unity of focus constituted by the contemplative person and the contemplated object, either

[5] J. Middleton Murry 1927 *The Evolution of the Intellectual* Jonathan Cape (p. 171)

an idea, or another person. In Western practice, intellectual activity has been plagued by scholasticism which introduced a dichotomous structure into philosophical thinking, that is, a separation, not merely a distinction between subject and object. As a result, as classical philosophy is becoming decreasingly viable and less useful to Western culture, a phenomenological approach to experience is preferred. Phenomenology is a replacement philosophy. The defects of scholasticism are the defects of its time and of the philosophical language of its day that has not kept pace with modern experience. Even a revised form of scholastic epistemology could not satisfy as the equivalent of a phenomenological interpretation of consciousness. In other words, "to know something" is not to be equated with "being conscious of something," in the human sense.

Any philosophy, even the untutored sort, can provide some degree of support in the interpretation and understanding of theology. History shows that natural theology, as an intellectual discipline in its own right, leads to religious understanding outside the Catholic religious tradition. This is so since Catholic theologians classify natural theology more as a philosophy than as a theology. It is worth noting that Catholic theology has never insisted that natural theology had a responsibility to interpret revelation. But natural theology as "the precepts and doctrine which, although differing in many ways from [the Church's] teaching, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men and women." [6] Natural theology, as an epistemology, is the philosopher's proper way of inquiring into created knowledge, not revelation. However, the *sensus fidelium*, that is, the lived experience of the faithful, interprets the church's revealed life. Thus, theologians are required for the *sensus fidelium.* Ironically, the church can get along without theologians, but it could not get along without the *sensus fidelium.* This is so because the *sensus fidelium* interprets the lived faith in the presence of the Holy Spirit.

It is almost a truism of religious belief that when old gods die people do not generally turn to atheism. Rather, new gods are invented. However, these new gods do not always prove a satisfactory replacement. What may prove a satisfactory replacement, however, is the acceptance of posthuman philosophy of consciousness in place of classical philosophy thus leading to new

[6] Austin Flannery 1996 *Nostra Aetate* in *The Basic Sixteen Documents of Vatican Council II* Costello Publishing Company (p. 571)

creative insights and relationships. History shows that controversial issues in religion, which were introduced by the scientific knowledge of the late 19th and early 20th centuries into American Catholicism were often incorporated at the pastoral or practical level of the faith. In America, unlike the Continent, there was more interest in Christian practice than theory. On the Continent the opposite was the case. The controversial issues, characterized by the Modernist Movement on the Continent and England, were contested primarily at the level of intellectual and theological argument. Initially, the Continental and the English philosophers could not understand the emphasis on the non-metaphysical or pragmatic language of the North American philosophers and theologians. Thus, they tended to look upon the American perspective as somewhat heretical. This created a division within the North American and the Continental and English philosophical perspectives. In the case of England and the Continent the liberal Catholics attempted to integrate the new scientific knowledge within the teaching authority of the church. That is to say that the Modernists, for their part, attempted to reconcile the conflict between the church's theology and scientific knowledge by up-dating (*aggiornamento*) the meaning of doctrine, dogma and church authority. As a result, many Modernist theologians accepted that a saintly life replaced the arid scholastic inquiry into doctrine and dogma of which the catechism, as the proper interpreter of revelation, resulted. In light of this saintly life, there was a trend away from professional theologians articulating the classical doctrinal and dogmatic needs of the church. In the case of America, the new trend was to engage in a scientific religious philosophy and to develop a methodology to serve the existential (ethical) needs of the individual in the human community. Understood as one movement these existential trends were minimally successful. Classical philosophy, being rooted in scholasticism, remains the preferred choice of the institutional church, but not necessarily the choice of the *sensus fidelium*.

Through a posthuman philosophy of consciousness, I suggest, humanity can choose to remain in close contact with the hopes and the anguish of this age and conceive an understanding that is more suitable to contemporary experience. Vatican II was not unaware of this option.

> Ours is a new age of history with profound and rapid changes spreading gradually to all corners of the earth. They are the products of people's intelligence and creative activity, but they recoil upon them, upon their judgments and desires, both individual and collective, upon their ways of thinking and acting in regard to people

> and things. We are entitled then to speak of a real social and cultural transformation whose repercussions are felt at the religious level also. [7]

A history of the 20th century cites Vatican II as the "story of the year" describing the 16 documents of the Council detailing ecclesiastical reform. In part it reads that [Pope John XXIII's]

> goal, as he told the Vatican Council's 2,500 participants, was to achieve a 'forward leap of the kingdom of Christ in the world' – that is, to bring the Church back to the center of world affairs. To do so, he preached, it was necessary to reconcile with other faiths, to serve as a bridge between East and West and the developed and developing nations, and update ancient traditions. [8]

I suggest, not to be forgotten is the need for philosophical renewal. Given this insight, there is need to establish a philosophy that will be suitable to interpret the expression of meaning assigned by humanity to itself as a subject *within* creation and, not humanity as merely understood as an object *of* creation. That is to say that, humanity is not only a product of creation, but humanity is a co-author of creation.

Further, history shows us that all substantial deepening of theological understanding has been the work not of ecclesiastical officials, but of faithful individuals whose proper role, sometimes in opposition to ecclesiastical officials, was to correct and modify the formal teaching of the church. Philosophy and revelation act and react upon each other. Within this interaction, contemporary understanding is that a philosophy of consciousness developed within an evolutionary experience of the revealed faith.

Most contemporary theologians think *in medio ecclesia,* that is, within the believing human community. Pre-modern communities were not oriented to a professionalism of any sort but to the authoritarianism of an elite guild of scholars. The pyramidal order is authoritarianism's form of organization, hierarchically structured for absolute rule and government. Modern society, however and to a degree, modern religions are oriented toward a modified hierarchical democratic system of governance, i.e., collegiality. And, in further contrast bureaucratic rationalism is an

[7] Austin Flannery 1996 *Gaudium et Spes* in *The Basic Sixteen Documents of Vatican Council II* Costello Publishing Company (p. 165)
[8] Lorraine Glennon *The 20th Century: An Illustrated History of Our Lives and Times* 1999 JG Press (p. 458)

organizational structure democratically ordered to manage and govern within a church polity. Posthuman communities are different in that they are oriented to the principle of creativity, in contrast to any form of government. Thus, any philosophy, including a philosophy of consciousness to serve as an *ancilla theologiea* must be reviewed as to its opportunities to serve within a model of governance.

Two posthuman academic developments which are closely allied are critical in giving some context to the current philosophical and theological issues of today. The first is a recognition that medieval Christendom has come to a close leaving secularism as a constituent of contemporary Western culture. The other is the psychological conception of the person that has developed in place of the philosophical understanding of the person as medieval Christendom waned. In short, philosophy stagnated. If philosophizing about God truly means that we are at the same time saying something meaningful about ourselves, then thinking about God in categories that belong to an earlier stage of humanity's understanding of knowledge simply is not satisfactory in a posthuman context. One of the criticisms of modernism is that it sets up a false confidence in rationalism and science. Within this false confidence, rationalism and science are understood as being able to convey the totality of existential experience given the mind's ability to intelligently classify and interpret experience. From a linguistic perspective and in contrast to "ism" words, plurality, subjectivity and inter-subjectivity which are all "ity" words and characteristic of posthumanity are held by philosophers to convey an authentic (true) existential meaning. Posthuman understanding moves away from an epistemology that would put humanity in contact with abstract ideas based on theoretical deduction. Posthuman understanding takes humanity toward an active conscious engagement with life itself to determine a future Christian philosophy. The church of the future, then, as an institution, ought not to constitute any specific philosophical system that would frustrate the broad notion of living Catholicity.

These essays are products of my reflection. They do not present a history of religious thought. Nor are they written in the form of a traditional catechism in the style of scholastic theology. Rather, they are a philosophical reflection intended to recast pre-Vatican II theological ideas in light of a philosophy of consciousness. My thinking is undertaken from within a collective body of believers, that is, the church. The church must be the *locus* of my study since there is no divine guarantee

attached to any inquiry made outside the Christian theological tradition. I have accepted that there are limits to Catholicism, the classical concept, but not to Catholicity, a phenomenological notion. It appears to me that Catholicism has been limited by scholastic philosophy, whereas Catholicity is free from scholastic constraints. In a philosophy of consciousness, I discriminate between speculative language and qualitative language. Speculative language belongs to classical philosophy, whereas qualitative language belongs to phenomenology.

Within the philosophical circumstances of our time, that is, at the evolutionary stage of posthuman philosophy, a Hellenized philosophy is no longer adequate to meet the needs of humanity. We are in a new age of history as social and cultural change continue throughout the entire world. Such social and cultural change have philosophical and theological implications for humanity as it searches for a better world but often does so without seeking a better philosophical explanation of its experience than the one it has inherited.

The work of the theologian today is conceived differently than in the days of the construction of the great theological systems. The contemporary task of the religious philosopher is to make known the great abiding truths of rational belief to a new generation. The principle merit and usefulness of a philosophy of consciousness, that is, of a dehellenized philosophy in theological interpretation is to satisfy the expectation of the believer. Formal philosophizing, resulting in human knowledge, is natural to human intellectual activity and is not to be confused with the *donum* of revelation. Note that no particular philosophy is required to qualify thinking. Thinking can be done without philosophizing, i.e., poetically. All philosophy is certainly culturally influenced. However, a philosophy of consciousness does not require any given cultural system of knowledge. A philosophy of consciousness is personal awareness of knowledge occurring in any context. A philosophy of consciousness has disclosed that God as presence is no longer totally responsible for everything. Such understanding allows humanity to conceive itself, then, as a co-responsible agent and co-creator of its future world.

It is the responsibility of the religious philosopher to promote the reasoned philosophy proper to consciousness rather than the imagery of cultural folklore. A reasoned philosophy proper to consciousness is not truly a new philosophy given that its roots extend back to ancient thinkers.

Ancient roots notwithstanding, a reasoned philosophy proper to consciousness, as an *ancilla theologiae nova*, is not confined to a particular revealed faith tradition but is susceptible of interfaith dialogue. It goes almost without saying that psychology, sociology, history anthropology, etc., make contributions to the contemporary philosophical task but it is only a philosophy of consciousness that is in a privileged position to undertake the task of theological reflection.

After Vatican II the Roman Catholic Church deliberately attempted to enter into conversation about religious meaning in the public forum with other faith communities. Vatican II recognized that the corporate church is to serve all humanity in its religious, as well as, secular life. This recognition raised the problem of the church re-defining its religious philosophy in the public forum. It needed to move from a religious philosophy that had, to a great extent, become Romanesque folklore in the eyes of a scientifically rooted secularism. Thus, beginning from the 19th century onwards, the Roman Catholic Church left its classical corporate self-understanding (which had become fossilized to a significant degree) and took on a posthuman, collective self-understanding (as a dynamically engendered posthumanity).

THE PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTION I ADDRESS

I find myself with a philosophical question that I did not conceive, but have inherited. As a contemporary thinker, however, I am attempting to clarify the transformation from a Hellenist perspective to a posthuman perspective. As a Western academic, I live within the philosophical anxiety and tension characteristic of the contemporary age. But within this tension I see new interpretive opportunities for a revised understanding leading to a new future. These opportunities initiate a process of philosophical dehellenization which ultimately enables fabrication of a philosophy of consciousness. Significantly, I have noted that various cultures have various philosophies. Pagan philosophers have existential philosophies to explain and interpret their experience. Monotheistic idealist philosophers promote a speculative philosophy to interpret their experience. Existential philosophers differ from speculative philosophers in that they take personal experience, as opposed to an ideology, as their point of departure. In other words, the philosophical question I address begins with personal experience, not speculative theory.

All that to say that with this shift in my understanding I have changed my theological perspective on the church. I now realize that the authentic church, in fact, may be found among those who have been excommunicated from the visible church. Further, I accept that those who are not members of the visible church may enjoy the benefits of its activity as a sacred and social institution. But they are not direct sharers in its sacred activity. In the words of Vatican II:

> The church, therefore, urges its sons and daughters to enter with prudence and charity into discussion and collaboration with members of other religions. Let

> Christians, while witnessing to their own faith and way of life, acknowledge, preserve and encourage the spiritual and moral truths found among non-Christians, together with their social life and culture. [9]

This does not mean to my mind, however, that those outside the visible limits of the hierarchical Church are not members of the actual Church of Christ in some manner. Through a philosophy of consciousness, they may recognize themselves as members. Through a philosophy of consciousness humans transcend the boundaries of their creaturely existence in such a way that they attain a posthuman status in their thinking. Within a personal perspective, I understand myself holistically as being other and greater than the sum of my individual parts. Such holistic understanding is a posthuman perspective that is not reserved to mystics or the like. Holistic understanding is at the center of the posthuman Christian life in which I come to know God as I come to know any other person, that is, through mutual self-giving. However, as a philosopher and as a theologian, I reflect uniquely in each case to the deposit of revelation. As a philosopher I can relate to the various existential interpretive philosophies (none of which are necessary) able to support the light of revelation, whereas, as a theologian I respond to the deposit of revelation by assigning a philosophical posthuman (as opposed to a human philosophical) religious meaning to it. As with any personal relationship, my relationship with the presence of God defies objectivism, but not objectivity. Objectivism belongs to a hellenized philosophy that looks to and preserves the past, whereas, objectivity belongs to a dehellenized philosophy (a posthuman one) which constitutes the present conception of a philosophy of consciousness capable of supporting belief for the future. That is to say, if I factor out the experience of a conscious conception of the future for my belief, I am taking away that which is most characteristic of posthumanity in me, that is, that I am greater than the sum of my individual parts and not merely a member of the visible church.

[9] Austin Flannery 1996 *Nostra Aetate* in *The Basic Sixteen Documents of Vatican Council II* Costello Publishing Company (p. 571)

FURTHER PHILOSOPHIZING ON LIFE

Life reveals itself to me through different experiences. Each is true (but not as we may currently think) yet no experience exhausts life. Traditionally, in the West we are presented philosophically with intellectual, rational and scientific claims for truth which we accept due to the force of argument to convince. To reach out and grasp truth intellectually was the intent of an epistemological philosophy of life that originated in ancient Greece (but has since been modified) through the ages. Such a modified philosophy allowed human beings to understand and master their life appropriate to the intellectual resources at each stage of evolution. A philosophy that convinces will have done so because it has been conceived from the experiences of life and will have subsequently designed similar experiences in life for its advancement.

The first of two non-traditional assumptions about philosophical activity that I make concerning life is that conscious human life is a progressive evolutionary adaptation to the physical world as humans fabricate it. By using the term "fabricate," and not "create," I intend to convey the notion that human activity is contingent activity consciously dependent upon another or others. It is not *ex nihilo*, nor an independent *sui generis* activity. The consciously fabricated world of one individual is not identical with the consciously fabricated world of another individual, but they are somehow connected. Human individual worlds are not only physically *connected* but are transcendently (metaphysically) *related*. That is, connections belong to the physical order of an organism, whereas, relations belong to the transcendental (metaphysical) order of the organism. Consciousness, (a transcendental/metaphysical reality) which fabricates the life-world, is the

necessary pre-requisite for the human mind to function. Human consciousness is the *sine qua non* of the person. Personal character and aspirations are differentiated within life by a conscious activity as we interpret the concrete world around us. In this concrete world of our fabrication we behold *being*, not *reality* (life) itself. We behold that which is finite and contingent, not that which is infinite and absolute. Contrary to the classical understanding I hold that reality (life) is beyond being and is that from which being is differentiated without reality (life) itself becoming exhausted.

In life we may interpret life's work, life's challenges but not always interpret life itself. A philosophy that interprets only life's works and challenges is doomed to being unfulfilling. Such unfulfillment, being the experience of an impotent humanity is set forth in the ancient Greek myth of Sisyphus. [10] To compensate for a philosophy that interprets only works and challenges, consciousness attempts to explain and clarify (psychologically and metaphysically) the significance of life through the diverse philosophies of mankind.

But what is consciousness? Consciousness is what I reside *in.* It is, and remains like life, an unknown. I live within the mystery of consciousness only able to distinguish the "me" from the "not-me." For the specifically religious personality, consciousness is the source of an incurable restlessness until it learns to rest in it as St Augustine noted. [11] The explanation and clarification of the deep spiritual nature of consciousness as such on the part of most human individuals has been only recognized of late. That is to say a philosophy of consciousness is a phenomenon of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The second (non-traditional) assumption I make is that consciousness is beyond the human ability to be totally comprehended in itself. The "me" vs the "not-me" is only a working definition of the conscious experience of a living human organism. Human consciousness is not purposeful until individuated by a living organism. Individuation is a self-reflexive activity and to my knowledge only the human organism is capable of such individuation. A philosophy of consciousness cannot be expected to present the same precision and clarity as an epistemological philosophy

[10] In Greek mythology, Sisyphus was king of what is now Corinth. He was punished for his self-aggrandizing craftiness and deceitfulness by being forced to roll a huge boulder up a hill, only for it to roll back down when it neared the top. His action was to be repeated for eternity, suggesting to modern humanity a failure to manage life.
[11] *Confessions* 1.1

(scholasticism) which has been fashioned into a coherent intellectual system based upon a Hellenistic foundation.

Evolution of Human Consciousness

As Charles Darwin (1809-1882) noted that biological evolution moves towards diversity, not towards uniformity. The Western philosophical interpretation of evolution, however, has tended to the opposite understanding to an "end point" of evolutionary history, from diversity to unity, a phenomenon ultimately inherited from ancient Hellenist philosophy. (The evolutionary movement to such an "end-point" in history is known in theology as Teilhardism.) To the contrary, in a philosophy of consciousness evolutionary diversity is expressed through concepts created in and by the mind. Human life must be formally conceptualized if the organism is to attain to a "higher life." The lack of this ability to conceive of evolution accounts for the lack of deliberate progress in non-human life. With respect to what is real, nothing can be conceived as more real than "me" to myself. In short, my "self" is the test and the measure of reality (life). If I ascribe reality (life) to entities in nature, I must assume that they are in some manner like myself, yet to some degree separate or at least distinguishable from me. Such real entities may or may not be conscious to the degree that I am. God, of course, is the exception since the reality (life) of God is not conceivable in any philosophical system.

Human organisms evolve physically (biologically) and transcendently (consciously). As human beings evolve consciously, they recognize that the past is *behind* them, the present is *around* them and, the future is *before* them. [12] A philosophy of consciousness is in constant development through heightening, deepening or broadening itself which continually demands new responses to new situations. One's existential life-world is constituted through a philosophy of consciousness and not constructed through a Hellenic philosophy of ideas. Human life must be lived within a mysterious reality, but a unique "self" can be distinguished within this mysterious reality. A philosophy of consciousness is therefore forever deliberately transforming and developing within this mysterious reality resulting in a self-transformation on the part of the organism. Instead of waiting to be moved and transformed through an external agent, human organisms seek to move

[12] "Before" not in any physical sense of a "déja vu" experience since humans cannot evolve into the past.

and transform themselves through memory, reflection and inquiry. As humans differentiate themselves within reality, they consciously establish their personality. Classically, the philosophical personality seeks unity and coherence to overcome chaos. The human "personality," unlike the animal "character," does not normally tolerate confusion in an existential experience without desiring to explain "why" or "how" it came to be so. Philosophical answers to the "how" and "why" must be sought in a way that harmonizes with non-philosophical (scientific) ways of human knowledge. It is only through a philosophy of consciousness that humans are brought to understand that there must be a higher degree of reality (life) to account for our own reality (life), since we are not conscious of creating ourselves. This higher degree of reality cannot be measured by any system of measurement. In this case, one and only one measurement is known to us. That is the measurement of our own will (life) which cannot be doubted.

In a philosophy of consciousness, the transcendent (the metaphysical) is proper to the world of human experience and the transcendent harmonizes with the physical patterns of life. In a philosophy of consciousness humans must form some hypothesis to solve the riddle of the cosmos. Infra-human life is not required to do so. From their experience, humans realize that consciousness individuates and differentiates (not creates) the human being physically from within an invisible mysterious reality. In the visible world, evolution shows that diversity, not unity, is the goal. This is a reversal in function of the human mind that constructs a fictitious completeness or union of the fragments of experience. Humans in seeking a restored union with a living reality are acting contrary to human conscious evolution. Conscious unity, not union is the goal of deliberate human evolution. The classical scholastic philosopher is more interested in a philosophy of the intellect, than in a philosophy of consciousness; more interested in the metaphysics of living beings, than in the existence of living beings; more interested in a theory of life, than in the practice of living.

The posthuman philosopher, however, has interest in that which is opposite to the classical mind as the following illustrates. In late Modernity, rapid technological advances have increased the opportunities for bureaucratic rule over the people who live in westernized and secularized cultures. The Internet is a case in point. With the advent of the Internet a new ideology "virtual reality," and thus not only technology, is in the process of being developed with the assistance of scientific advancement. At this point in human evolution "virtual" community often seems to

suggest a negative ideology, potentially threatening the traditional concept of the person. The Internet is perceived as a de-personalizing forum since it has no need for physical, that is, an embodied contact among those who use it. In the Internet virtual community there is no possibility for corporal incarnations such as constitute the existential life-world relationships in the "real" world. (One might argue that the Internet affords a type of "out-of-body" experience.) Thus, virtual community is the simulated computerized version of physical communal existence, which presents many philosophical and theological challenges to our understanding ourselves as incarnated spiritual human beings. To my mind, the non-incarnated and technological relationship, misnamed as a virtual experience, cannot reflect any authentic human interaction since the simulation created by the virtual decision-makers is not identical to the experience of two incarnated persons. The inordinate and uncritical use of internet technology may eventually fabricate incompetent, non-humanized, and "un-incarnated" individual beings. However, to balance the negative criticism, the internet as a two-way medium has been known to *stimulate* positively the human mind in developing human knowledge, whereas television, as a one-way medium, has been known to *dull* the mind's activity. In short, the internet turns one's mind on and television turns one's mind off. More thought needs to be given to this experience.

REFLECTIONS OUTSIDE THE THEOLOGICAL GUILD & SELF–TUTORING IN THEOLOGY

1. Reflections outside the guild

Theology began as a professional activity in the West with the establishment of the universities. The purpose of theology was to serve the Church in clarifying and formalizing doctrine and dogma. In an alternative to theologizing within the guild of Christian philosophy these essays investigate theology outside of any ecclesiastical norms committed to a particular interpretation. These essays present theology as an ecumenical and ecclesial, not ecclesiastical, enterprise in the context of a community of Christian faith. The term *ecclesial* refers to a particular form of governance of the Christian life in contrast to an *ecclesiastical* government that incorporates a classical structure within the Christian community. The doctrine and dogmatic formulations extant in most classically governed churches come from theological reflection upon the experience of the church as a believing community living at an earlier time. Doctrine and dogma were formulated through controversy. As a consequence of time, centuries of various doctrinal and dogmatic controversies had become fossilized as religious understanding no longer reflected, nor accorded with contemporary experience. Contemporary religious experience is developing in response to evolving scientific and cultural novelties — including the rise in awareness of personal consciousness.

A way to conduct self-tutoring in theology outside the guild is through critical reflection on consciousness. Reflection is an innate activity of the human mind. However, critical theological

reflection is taught and reaches into the depths of conscious. Critical reflection is a conscious attempt to establish an authentic Christian anthropology, or understanding of human life and purpose that enables the individual to evolve uniquely as a human being. Within this capacity to evolve, critical reflection enables human thinking to transcend the social, political and religious experience that was originally interpreted within a theological guild. [13] Critical reflection discloses that philosophical and theological systems are not universal, but are contingent upon the culture that supports them. Western Christian heritage has shown, through critical reflection, a movement from a hierarchical and civilly unified governing structure to various democratic and globally diversified structures dependent upon the world's cultures and sub-cultures.

Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) was among the first to recognize this phenomenon. He believed that humanity acts as a self-organizing, pre-theoretical whole whose laws are not simply the laws of social or scientific societies. Pre-theoretical humanity acts according to the human spirit (consciousness) manifested in philosophical movements such as holism and emergent evolution.[14] By reflecting outside the theological guild one avoids the historical baggage of disputed ecclesiastical, political and power-related issues that emerged in the Reformation/Counter-Reformation period but which are no longer relevant. The way is then opened for new critical investigations of religious experience in a contemporary context.

An existential, subjective and phenomenological understanding of life may serve as appropriate methodology for a philosophical self-tutoring process. In the self-tutoring process, the ideological legacy of the past cannot be ignored any more than can the interpretation of practical experience of those critical thinkers who have shaped the past. Their legacy counts as history not in virtue of having taken place, but by virtue of history's capacity to account for our present situation, or how we got to where we are. Thus, phenomenological understanding of theology must interpret the intentions of artists, musicians, novelists, poets, psychologists and the authors of the scriptures. Contemporary self-tutoring in theology outside the guild must take into account human

[13] One of the earliest expressions of this insight occurs in E. E. Thomas 1938 *The Political Aspect of Religious Development* Heritage and Unicorn Press (pp. 183-90)
[14] Richard Brandt 1941 *The Philosophy of Schleiermacher: The Development of His Theory of Scientific and Religious Knowledge* Harper & Brothers (p. 55)

temperament, experience and understanding of both previous and current thinkers within Western culture in order to bear fruit.

2. Self-tutoring in theology

These essays were written in light of the deeper insight I obtained through a self-tutoring in theology. My self-tutoring also included reflection on the faith from outside the Western context because Western culture is coming into contact with Eastern culture and its philosophical and religious traditions. Diverse thinking has a long history within Christian theology. Through an engagement with diverse cultures, the early Christian theologians discovered a variety of contexts in which they could articulate the development of the faith. [15] Within a self-tutoring approach, I suggest that readers may undertake to construct diverse perspectives individually and collectively and these conceptualizations will, in turn, influence the interpretations of other perspectives. Eventually, these diverse conceptualizations will develop into a collective theological understanding and may become, if not uniform, normative for the individual and, in time, for the Christian community.

Normative theological understanding, phenomenologically understood, is not fixed and never exists statically in any homogeneous groups. Rather, various normative theological understandings may encompass convergent themes and approaches within any given group but never form a uniform system. Although an attempt at a uniform system was made in the case of the Western Catholic scholastic tradition. The traditional scholastic method was composed of the integration of Aristotelian and Platonic thought patterns. It became the dominant tool for intellectual argument of the age. The *Summa* of St Thomas Aquinas is the best example of this and characterized the medieval synthesis of philosophical and theological thought. This medieval synthesis held together well until the middle of the 20th Century, when after the shattering events of the two world wars, the technological revolution, the rapid developments in philosophy, in the humanities, in psychology and in the social sciences brought this medieval view of Christendom to an end. Out of this new milieu diverse philosophical ways of thinking surfaced which now shape the

[15] Cf. George Tyrrell 1906 *Lex Credendi: A Sequel to Lex Orandi* Longmans (p.131)

hermeneutic from within a phenomenological perspective indicating the beginning of a posthuman age which seeks to transcend the humanism of the Renaissance and secular humanism.

Self-tutoring in theology is actually a way of "thinking after" an event which arises out of reflection on experience. Self-tutoring in theology employs a subjective philosophical approach in that it posits the primacy of the person. The motive for self-tutoring is internal as opposed to external. For Catholics and Christians in general Vatican II symbolized the end of a conventional understanding of the faith and introduced a new perspective or approach to interpreting the faith, a faith rooted in phenomenology and critical reflection. [16] Vatican II was not only an up-dating of doctrine and dogma, an *aggiornamento*, but also a phenomenological understanding of theological thinking. It was a *ressourcement* of a particular philosophical type. Generally, there are three features in a theological *ressourcement*, but only the third is discussed in these pages. One is a return to the patristic and medieval sources, another is a return to the writings of St Thomas and a third is a dialogue with the new philosophical movements of the 19th and 20th Centuries paying particular attention to the Enlightenment, modernity and the liberalism interpreted through a holistic understanding. Collectively these features present an opportunity for posthuman thinking. In particular, holistic thinking recognizes that any whole is other than, and greater than, the sum of its individual parts. That is, any entity, perceived or conceived, is meaningful beyond its limitations.[17] From a holistic perspective, no satisfactory explanation of the person can be given in a system with closed boundaries. Holistic understanding always remains free from constraint and open to evolutionary development.

A holistic theological interpretation does not eclipse science as knowledge but seeks to disclose the wisdom revealed through relationships of the person within a human-divine milieu. For those who choose a holistically religious path, such theology offers an almost infinite opportunity to reflect on the presence of the divine in their experience. Thus, a further intention of these essays is to introduce the self-tutored philosopher to an approach to understanding the various new insights given the evolution of theological thinking without relying solely on a theoretical and

[16] John Kobler 2000 "Vatican II's Pastoral Theology Needs Philosophy" in *The Modern Schoolman* 78 no. 1 (pp. 89-95)
[17] Cf. J. C. Smuts 1926 *Holism and Evolution*. Macmillan

authoritative theological system. A self-tutored approach does not intend at producing a final theology that will be the same for all people in all situations and cultures. Rather, the intent is to offer the opportunity of a critical understanding to persons at each stage of their religious development as they act as their own interpreters. [18] The process of phenomenological reflection is a descriptive, rather than deductive process. The starting point for phenomenological reflection is the human condition. Theological phenomenological reflection as self-tutoring interprets experience through personal, relational terms of consciousness and not through pre-determined ideological and fixed terms and concepts. That is, theological phenomenological reflection seeks to criticize constructively any stifling ideological, sociological and psychological aspects of a classical philosophical approach thus enabling a new experience of the life-world.

Humans are born into a world not of their own making. The human world is undergoing a varied and complex evolution that cannot be stopped or curtailed. Ironically, the secularism of the current age affords a philosophical opportunity to recognize a conscious transcendent dimension to life. Traditional Christian theology understands God (as an ideal) transcendent to, separate from and outside of creation. Whereas, in this secular age, Christian theological anthropology understands God (through relationships) as phenomenally immanent *in*, and yet transcendent *to* creation, as an other and greater "non-self." Humans establish the meaning and purpose of life in living in co-operation with that which is "other and greater" than themselves, as the self-tutored theologian often discovers.

[18] Cf. Edward Schillebeeckx 1984 *The Schillebeeckx Reader* ed. Robert Schreiter, Crossroad (pp.89-91)

PHILOSOPHY OF THE THEOLOGICAL TYPE

Philosophy of the theological type does not necessarily consist in the doctrinal or dogmatic convictions of an ecclesiastical corporation. It is a reflective exercise in thinking as affected by the reading and digesting of ideas of philosophers not tied to a guild. With this understanding in mind I outline a selection of short reflections in philosophy of the theological type.

Initially, my philosophical reflections seemed unique but I soon discovered that similar reflections had been undertaken by William Gladstone (1809-1898) and George Tyrrell (1861-1909). Even though I am writing in 2019, William Gladstone, George Tyrrell and I share a similar philosophical foundation to our theology. It was during my undergraduate years at the University of Toronto, that Leslie Dewart had introduced me to a new concept in his lectures which he coined *Theological Philosophy*. [19] When I encountered the writings of William Gladstone and George Tyrrell, I discovered that they had also embarked on an investigation of a similar sort within Western philosophical and theological circles. Contemporary theologians, whether they are Jewish, Christian or Muslim have a responsibility to interpret the mind of their respective communities. These communities mediate the experience of believers as they pass on to future generations the fruits of their theological reflections. In order for a theologian to be ecclesially credible critical reflective thinking is a requirement. Such critical reflective thinking today requires an excursion "outside the philosophical box," as it were. Thus, I undertake a critical philosophy of the theological type from a phenomenological perspective, that is to say a dehellenized philosophy.

[19] Cf. *Foundations of Belief* 1969 Herder & Herder (p.11)

In addition to any interfaith discussion on revelation among the Jewish, Christian and Muslim theologians there is the issue of critical philosophical discussion among all theological philosophers including those of the non-monotheistic religions. These philosophers also undertake critical reflection through a clear, professional and systematic sharing of their insights on the experience of God. The contemporary sharing of such insights requires, of necessity, a dehellenized approach to enable non-European philosophers to participate (or, they must become Hellenist philosophers). Philosophy is the most fundamental discipline available to construct personal, but not private, understanding of religious experience.

Existential philosophical questions, not idealist questions, preoccupy humanity today. Existential philosophical and theological ways of thinking are the means by which humans evaluate their experience as members of educated communities. [20] A philosophy of the theological type transcends cultural limitations and denominational religious traditions. That is why within an existential theological philosophy what is said of Christian theology may be said, *inter alia*, of Jewish and Islamic theological philosophy. Further, theological philosophy is not reserved to those theologians who officially represent an organized and visible religious community. A theological philosophy, by transcending denominational and official ecclesiastical interests, is less likely to become indebted to an institutional and political ideology. And, in abandoning the classical model of rational theology, theological philosophy abandons the polemical promulgation of doctrine and dogma.

A theological philosophy must be distinguished from religious studies, which is a separate discipline in its own right. As a distinct academic discipline Religious Studies has its roots in the Western academic thinking characteristic of the mid to late 19th Century. In its pedigree are listed philology, linguistics, historiography, anthropology, ethnology, archaeology, sociology and psychology. In the contemporary academic context Religious Studies seeks to describe religious belief within the milieu of particular cultural experiences. A theological philosophy, however, having been influenced by the Enlightenment and Reformation, seeks personal knowledge, not

[20] By educated communities I mean those societies which no not express their contemporary beliefs in ancient myths, folklore or legends.

from any ideological and rationalistic doctrine or dogma, but from existential and phenomenological critical thinking. However, despite this evolution of thinking with respect to theology's role, for most professionals, theology is still perceived to be a service of interpretation intended for persons preparing to minister in a particular religious community or corporate faith tradition.

To the contrary, I recognize a primary role of theological philosophy as a *ministerium verbi divini*, that is, rendering a (philosophical) service to the Word of God. That is so since revelation in the full sense of word is beyond being reserved to a particular institutional faith community. Revelation is of service to humanity. A theological philosophy then is an interpretation of personal religious experience understood individually and collectively within the human family. If it were not so, a theological philosophy would be reserved to an interpretation by way of the Church's catechism, or through an ideological system of doctrine or dogma of a particular faith tradition.

Certain *existentialia*, or existential experiences within human life provide a focus for theological philosophy. They are fear, despair, hope, suffering, death, happiness, and guilt. Yet, these *existentialia* present only one perspective of human existence, the human aspect (*a partis hominis*). They are not of God's perspective (*a parte Dei*) as it were which is also present in human existence. However, the metaphysical attempts throughout history at proving God's existence are futile in the contemporary world. Such metaphysical attempts by philosophy rooted only in theory tell us nothing of God's presence. In the contemporary Western culture since the Christian life may be legally private, as well as ethically and morally public, a theological philosophy is ethically and morally possible within the public forum.

These deeper existential questions need to be answered by philosophers and theologians and not just by scientists. The Western intellectual tradition, from the Hellenists onwards, reflects a developing understanding of an individual and of a collective *humanum*. This *humanum* is that life which constitutes humanity. In the West it has been traditionally the goal of society and government to enhance this *humanum*, through a humanitarian social and political construction of civic society. Only in the recent past has this goal been challenged by the concept of a sovereign individualism and collectivism taking preference over a *humanum* of individuality and collectivity,

particularly in the West. In a theological philosophy the idea of individual sovereignty (individualism) is not an absolute goal. Rather, the individual must be subordinated to God in some manner, that is, perhaps as co-creator to creator. *Gaudium et Spes: The Pastoral Constitution on the Church* developed at the Second Vatican Council teaches that there is inherent value and meaning, not just acquired value and meaning in the lives of individuals in this world. *Gaudium et Spes* notes that universal Christian humanitarianism is founded on the dignity that is grounded on God's revelation to the Christian community, not just to particular individuals. [21]

The intent of a theological philosophy is the dehellenization of religious experience which is nothing less than the conscious recognition of the holiness and sacredness of the future of belief. This is a radically different view than the static view inherited within Western culture. An immediate theological philosophy focuses on the unfinished business of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, namely, the so-called Modernist Movement. This Movement, as I see it, arose from a tension between the personal and corporate theological understanding of Catholic theologians and the Church's magisterium. This tension resulted from a challenge to the dominant intellectual mind-set of the time, with its roots in the scholastic tradition, which "persisted until 1914 — when a new pope, Benedict XV, began to reverse [the Church's] edicts and restore some Modernist priests to their parishes." [22] However, ultimately, the Modernist Movement was terminated by ecclesiastical authorities thus giving it an uncertain future among Catholic theologians. But, many of the insights that have benefited the Church have arisen from the intellectual mind-set of the critical scholarship of the Modernist theologians of this period. One such insight has been the attention paid to the personal understanding of the experience of faith as opposed to the corporate teaching of the faith, i.e., doctrine and dogma. That many Catholic theologians today accept such insights of critical scholarship is, in fact, a fulfillment of the hope of the theologian George Tyrrell, mentioned above. Disappointingly, to my mind, many Catholic theologians immediately prior to and since the election of Pope John XXIII, who convened Vatican II, have been moving away from such critical theological thinking. However, a philosophy of the

[21] Cf. Austin Flannery 1996 *Gaudium et Spes* in *The Basic Sixteen Documents of Vatican Council II* Costello Publishing Company (p. 164)
[22] Lorraine Glennon, ed. *The 20th Century: An Illustrated History of Our Lives and Times* 1999 JG Press (p. 56)

theological type may counter this trend that seems to be taking precedence over the ecumenical climate of Vatican II.

INTRODUCTION TO DEHELLENIZATION

A Personal Process of Constructing Christian Theology

Having come to appreciate the influence of Leslie Dewart in my academic career, my intention is to provide for the reader a brief background to the development of my own philosophical thinking from my undergraduate years to the writing of these pages. My motivation to offer this reflection is that there may be other philosophers, or theologians, with similar interests. This reflection is not a chronological or historical sequence detailing the events that represent stages of my philosophical development. Rather, it is as an account by which the reader, in light of the experience of reading this collection of essays, may revisit his or her own thinking. That is to say, dates and occasions marking my various philosophical conversions, when I stopped believing "that" and began believing "this," is not my intent here. But I reflect on the existential context in which a series of conscious realizations in my thinking took place that represent the phenomenological moments of insight that constitute essential changes in what I believe. These reflections are a particular type of philosophy, which is in sympathy, but not identical to that of Plato and Plotinus. That is, I hold that philosophy is, at least, an intellectual and meditative activity (some would say religious activity). Further, this philosophical and meditative activity is what relates me to my environment from which I am becoming, in fact, differentiated and allows me to construct on an on-going basis a philosophy of the theological type.

Like many other students down through history, I began my philosophical questioning during my undergraduate years studying classical philosophy, which I later came progressively to abandon.

There was not an immediate and total rejection of classical philosophy during these years. I took what "worked" from classical philosophy and rejected what was irrelevant to my experience. Today, the rejection of what is irrelevant to my experience, or existential context, unlike during my undergraduate years is more thoroughly thought out and consciously maintained. Over time, I have come to realize that from a philosophical perspective it is not that I somehow apprehend or "capture being" through my experience, but rather that my experience of being is manifested phenomenally, that is, I take on an awareness of personal presence in various ways. I no longer consider classical Hellenist philosophy as the necessary and unique philosophical underpinning characteristic of all human thinking as I once did. Classical Hellenist philosophy is only one point of view that originated in ancient Greek culture. It is one result of the evolutionary process of the various philosophical movements characteristic of the human mind that have evolved in thinking.

Like many philosophers of the Catholic scholastic tradition I sought contact with the structure of metaphysical reality through a transcendental philosophy, Thomism to be exact. In the initial years of my philosophical thinking, I accepted uncritically that reality was there *a priori* and to be known through formal ideological structures by experience. However, I later came to realize that my experience did not confirm that these structures, that I had presumed to be there, did exist. However, instruction by Leslie Dewart helped me understand that a phenomenological point of view did reveal to one's consciousness a *structure of relations* with others. As well, I discovered that a phenomenological philosophy of the theological kind discloses further relations to other relations that I, in fact, do construct. There are no *a priori* structures to be revealed. Thus, like René Descartes (1596-1650) I abandoned any positive knowledge, however, I did not assume a condition of epistemological doubt as he did. In my case, a critical self–reflection on consciousness, not on epistemology, replaced the "Cartesian doubt" in my thinking. As a result, my self-consciousness, which I cannot doubt, affirmed my existential state and allowed me to understand and give meaning to experience.

Giving meaning to my experience is limited to the present moment. This must be the case since I cannot give meaning to the past, nor to the future. I am conscious only of my "self" as existing now. Having accepted this, I came to question whether or not the scholastic philosophical ideology that I inherited from (or perceived in) my culture did, in fact, pre-exist in my consciousness. Or,

did I conceive it to be there? I concluded that I did not perceive it to be there, but conceived it to be there. Subsequently, I replaced classical ideology with personal consciousness. In these reflections I note that I am able to distinguish between my being and my becoming, but I am not able to separate my being from my becoming. As well, I am conscious that my being and my becoming each make up a simultaneous event that constitutes "me" in the present moment and which leads me to conceive as equi-primordial. I conceive, not perceive, each as such since I am not aware of my being, or my becoming, as somehow determined necessarily outside of my consciousness by some other agency. I experience my being and my becoming as a unity within the present moment of my conscious existence such that I experience no qualitative difference between the two. They are in fact the same. To posit a logical priority of being over becoming in the realm of consciousness is an artificial and analytical construct that is actually not accurate. A logical priority of being over becoming may, however, act as a useful philosophical fiction for those insisting on a Hellenistic perspective — or for those who hold that something must "be" before some "thing" can become something.

I see no reason to continue to hold to the existence of material forms characteristic of classical philosophy. I adopt this position, or stance, out of my conscious experience which does not analyze being and subsequently discover a framework of material forms. Rather, I consciously experience my "self" as being in physical relation to other beings, be they subjects or objects. My experience is that my consciousness differentiates between that which is "me" and that which is "not-me." I am aware of my conscious self, that is, "I," as manifested through my physical body, yet as differing from my physical body. As a human being, I do not exist as a static "I" separate from my body. I experience myself to be an incarnated human being in relationship to my body and other bodies. And, by an incarnated human being I mean a living human organism capable of self-reflection.

To expand upon the above, I present five phenomenological interpretations. Each is a reflection within philosophy of a theological type with an eye to the dehellenized future of personal, but not private, belief. They are: 1) dehellenization and theological construction, 2) dehellenization and becoming conscious of God, 3) dehellenization and belief, 4) dehellenization and remembering/re-conceptualizing and 5) dehellenization and watching and waiting.

Dehellenization and Theological Construction

These days I undertake philosophy of a theological type from within a dehellenized understanding. A dehellenized understanding is not a fixed point of view but a point of view that is perpetually undergoing development and re-constitution. The dehellenization process has helped me to realize that my Christian and secular experience had been, for a time, identical. I had no need to distinguish between them. It was easy, therefore, for me to think that to be a Christian was co-terminus with the values of living within the secular Western social and cultural order. It took some time for me to truly appreciate that the secular Western social and cultural order is, in fact, the legacy of a Hellenized philosophical tradition. While reading the works of contemporary Western philosophers, I realized that this Hellenized philosophical inheritance was of serious concern to many of them. The Hellenized philosophical inheritance appeared to be undergoing a critical process of assessment even to them. And upon critical examination of these philosophers, I made a discovery that some of them were merely engaged in up–dating traditional ideas and not engaged in a process of dehellenization at all. Realizing that, I ceased to follow their lead. I rejected the mere up-dating of ideas and sought instead an alternative to only up-dating that was truly a dehellenized approach to theological philosophy.

Embracing the Catholic philosophical language of Vatican II, I favour *ressourcement* over *aggiornamento*. That is, a return to the sources of philosophical language over a mere updating of philosophical language, designed to conform to modern usage. In light of Vatican II, I asked as a philosopher and theologian experiencing the end of a classical philosophical age, what was to be my role in fashioning any new understanding between Christian and secular experience. The answer was that only by returning to the sources of Western philosophical thinking could I provide a satisfactory personal orientation for the way ahead. In advance of some of my peers, I soon realized that when answers to my philosophical questions were given to me beforehand there was no need for me to undertake any philosophical contemplation myself. I could remain philosophically passive merely receiving pre-existing ideas uncritically. I realized also that I needed to face my own responsibility and recognize that I am an agent for change within myself and within my environment. Thus, my problem became not just how to correct past understanding,

but, more significantly, how to plan for an intellectual future free from the constraints of a Hellenized philosophy.

Only through a methodology not dependent on a Hellenized structure, but one constituted phenomenologically could I plan for a future that did not reproduce my earlier beliefs. Through reflecting phenomenologically upon my experience, I have come to understand that Christianity is neither an abstraction, nor a social institution exclusively. Nor is it a mere political ideology. I have abandoned these understandings of the Christian church. These days, I express my Christian belief through relationships (not ideally) within the life of my community of faith. The faith community in which I live possesses a historical reality not only in the psychological, social, political and natural senses, but also in the transcendent, spiritual, and supernatural senses. I must explain this. To believe in the Judeo-Christian revelation is to believe that human existence is constituted by certain events that engage God's activity. What I have found significant in these events, however, is that the original revelation might have been interpreted otherwise than it initially was. I admit that I was not aware of the implications of the insight, that original revelation could possibly have been otherwise than what it was, until I was exposed to Leslie Dewart's thinking on the subject. It was at this stage of my philosophical development that I managed to begin formulating a somewhat satisfactory dehellenized philosophical interpretation of my experience. Religious belief became a question of philosophically reinterpreting, in the presence of God and in satisfactory and dehellenized concepts, my daily experience.

This understanding frees me from the belief that a pre-existing Fate determines my conduct. I do recognize, however, that there are limiting factors in my environment but a philosophical necessity is not one of them. Even within the limiting factors of my environment, I have the power to make it otherwise. If my theological philosophy has any practical meaning and Christian value for me and my community, it is because I am trying to work out my existential relationships in order to live in responsible freedom. To live in responsible freedom is the freedom for which I am created. Further, in that freedom, I believe that I am to live in a philosophically contemplative manner, that is, I am to respond freely to the supernatural vocation which I perceive God addresses to me. I try to respond creatively and faithfully to this vocation, as an individual within a dehellenized cultural and social order.

I have noticed that when the Hellenic philosophers attempt something similar in their cultural and social setting, they presuppose that philosophical ideas with an independent existence constitute reality because they accept that worldly events depended upon the necessity of Fate, or the necessity of God, if you will. On the contrary, I am a believer, not in the necessity of Fate but in human freedom. Worldly events do not depend on the necessity of Fate. When, in my human freedom, I contemplate about what I should do if I were to do the right thing in creating (fabricating) my future, I consider what I have to do to bring into existence what does not yet exist, or is not yet present in my conscious experience. In short, I exercise my co-creator status.

As a free agent I am able philosophically to contemplate issues before acting on them. Thus, I am truly responsible for my conduct. No one else is. There is no group, or individual, that can do away with my moral freedom. Only I can do that. But, in abdicating my moral freedom I would become dehumanized. My moral decisions are contingent upon prior a human freedom which mere animals lack. I cannot avoid conducting myself morally, that is, reasonably, humanely, and autonomously. I do not do, from an ethical perspective, what Plato and Aristotle did, that is, attempt to conform to a preconceived and predetermined order of reality. In short, through my theological philosophy I have come to realize that I construct my future of belief as an incardinated, individuated and dehellenized human being.

Dehellenization and Becoming Conscious of God

I interpret my experience of God at the level of consciousness, or awareness which has been reached through a continuing development of my thinking. Because of the acceptance of a dehellenized philosophy I now live with an awareness of the divergent conceptions of the God of Christian revelation. These divergent conceptions of God arise from differing interpretations. One such interpretation is from a subjective point of view which discloses that my awareness of God is intrinsically connected to my personal self-realization. That is, what I make myself to be reveals God's presence to me. God is present to me as an unknown active "not-me." That is to say that in my active self-awareness I do not seek the Hellenic philosophical sense of virtue (the ultimate

resignation to one's Fate) as a style of living. [23] Rather, contrary to Dickinson's observation, I seek to be creative, thus becoming fulfilled in God's presence. In my self-realization I seek to be in the presence of God creatively with God's self-communicative presence present to me.

Among the first Hellenistic beliefs that I recall rejecting in the evolution of my philosophical thinking was that reality *must* be conceived as being, or reality is not conceivable at all. That is, there is no reality beyond being. Having rejected the notion that reality is exhausted by being, I no longer needed to equate, as the Hellenists did, being and existence. Being and existence are constructs of the particular Hellenic concept of epistemology and not universal to human thought. It should be remembered, as well, that not all ancient Hellenist philosophers held the belief that reality must be conceived as being.

The new belief in God continues to develop within the dehellenization of my everyday experience of dogma and doctrine. This includes the process of self-conscious rejection of any philosophical point of view that is no longer formally valid and remains fossilized within the culture I have inherited. Such rejection is required in order to permit a new methodology for philosophical contemplation via a phenomenological point of view. In other words, dehellenization is an activity of the self-conscious creation of the future of belief through rejection of a classical philosophical inheritance and the acceptance of a phenomenological replacement.

In classical philosophy, to know a thing better usually means to know more about the same thing. That is, knowledge is conceived quantitatively, not qualitatively. This understanding became problematic for me when I understood that the closing of revelation with the death of the last apostle meant that my Christian faith could not attain to any new truths. The catechism teaches that the Trinity and Incarnation were new truths revealed to the Christian faith in relation to Judaism. This was the development *within Judaism* that made the Christian faith "complete." Accepting my Christian faith as complete, I realized that it could only develop through the multiplication of concepts about the faith that I already somehow knew. However, such

[23] G. Lowes Dickinson 1932 *The Greek View of Life* Methuen (p. 202) To be virtuous was to act under the control of the universal reason which was supposed to dwell in man as man; and such action was independent of all the gifts of chance. It was as open to a slave as to a statesman.

explanation did not coincide with my evolutionary understanding. I did not conceive God's self-presence in Jesus of Nazareth as fixed within a closed system of revelation that occurred in the past and that had been completed in the past. Rather, I conceived myself as living in an open-ended context that revealed the presence of God as a transcendent presence in the concrete facts of my daily life.

Any attempts at reunification with some form of being from which I originally became separated (or was created by) does not satisfy me. However, I am satisfied in my continual and conscious attempts at self-differentiation out of that reality (a "not-me") with which I am identified and share a unity, but not a union. My self-differentiation out of that reality is an active process whereby my unique identity emerges as existence and I become present to myself as well as to others. To be sure, my identity is not only my concrete being. My concrete being constitutes my identity as well. In other words, I perceive my identity in the differentiation of my being from other beings, and in my conscious conception of God's presence.

I have accepted that the Hellenization of Christianity is historically accurate and was a gradual transformation of earlier cultural forms into later ones. Hellenism, however, is not the dominant cultural form of the world today. It was the dominant cultural form of the ecumenical world of the apostolic and patristic ages. Throughout the apostolic and patristic ages, it was practically impossible to distinguish between the universalization and the Hellenization of Christianity. In the Hellenist philosophical legacy God is a transcendent being, vis à vis all other entities, material and spiritual. This is in contrast to the Hebraic (not necessarily Judaic) philosophical legacy in which God is a presence of one kind among all other kinds of beings. Within a phenomenological dehellenized understanding, God is better understood as that reality (life) who is *present to* being, but not being. Further, God is that agency that makes my being "to be." Thus, my unique life is a differentiated, or individuated life, a coming-into-being as manifested in relation to God, who is present to me.

In the early stages of my philosophical development, due to the influence of a modified Greek metaphysical thinking, I thought in terms of a separation or dichotomy between the *essence* and the *existence* of God. I now think alternatively based on my experience, which does not

authentically accord with that Hellenistic understanding. I am an existential thinker whose belief bears directly upon the experience of the presence of God and not upon words or upon concepts about God. To exist through words and concepts and, to be present as experienced are different philosophical understandings. Reality, which is beyond physical being, reveals itself as presence within which my process of self-differentiation occurs. In fact, there is, beyond my physical being, present to me, a reality (a "not-me") of which I am conscious, that when felt by me, constitutes me more fully than I would be, were I not exposed to its influence. It is acceptable from a phenomenological perspective, but not a Hellenistic one, to say *inter alia* that all being (existence) is real, but not all reality is being (existence).

I am conscious of my constitution through a holistic experience. I am conscious that I am other and more than the sum of my parts. A holistic experience does not burden me with having to prove that there is actually a God. Rather, in my philosophy of a theological type, I am concerned with disclosing how the reality of God's presence is present in my consciousness. My concern is for the presence and reality of God, not for God's existence or being. In a holistic experience what must be revealed to me, since it is not materially obvious, is God's presence, not God's existence or being. This real presence of God is not that of Greek metaphysics. For me to be a subject, that is, a person, it is to be known to myself as being in God's presence. My personality is a manifestation of my unique self-presence to myself and to others in the presence of God. If I, as a Christian, look at the world and understand human nature through Hellenic eyes, I find it necessary to assert the omnipotence of God over and possibly against me. But I consciously experience that God does not have absolute power over me in that sense. I am conscious, however, that there is the relationship between myself and God which renders us present to each other.

All human subjects, I believe, are capable of realizing this insight. As I dehellenize my Christian belief, I must recast its meaning in terms that do not imply God's ascendancy over me in the classical sense. My current dehellenized belief does not require the conception of an independent, supernatural, transcendental being that is isolated from me as part of my Christian faith. What is now fundamental to my Christian faith is my consciousness of God's immanent presence, that is, God's grace in me as a true gift of God (*donum*). As contemporary Western philosophy departs more and more from its Hellenic presuppositions, the concept of classical supernaturalism loses

its usefulness in my belief system of consciousness. However, to this day, the mainstream of Catholic philosophy has remained a scholastic and hence a somewhat unsympathetic understanding of contemporary anthropology. In an alternative view to scholasticism, I hold that God's presence or grace is not independent of human nature, but human nature discloses God's presence because that is how human nature has evolved, in relation to God's image and likeness. Animal nature lacks this evolutionary receptivity or awareness of God's presence.

Dehellenization and Belief

Concerning belief, the question that I have asked myself is: Do I consciously undertake to construct critically the future of my belief, or do I choose to remain satisfied with a pre-critical understanding? In my present philosophy of a theological type, I consider issues from a non-meta-metaphysical perspective. Having rejected Hellenistic understanding I have transcended Hellenistic ideological thinking. In an existential philosophical understanding, the problem becomes not whether the world will change or whether it will remain the same. The problem is whether the world will change of its own accord without my participation, or whether it will be changed with my deliberate participation.

While there is no possibility to return to the past, the shaping of my future of belief does require an analysis of the past without re-living it. In analyzing the past, I am conscious of myself, not as a static being, but as an active free agent in the presence of other active free agents. In constructing the future of my belief in light of an analysis of the past I have chosen not to repeat the traditional approach to philosophy, nor embrace any philosophical foundation provided by an up-dated classical perspective. Rather, I have chosen to look to the future and actualize myself as an agent effecting present change. In my philosophical contemplation I have made the same discovery as that of many phenomenological philosophers before me. That is, I discovered the activity of differentiating myself within reality.

It was only after I had learned to define myself in terms of consciousness that I came to appreciate the logic of the process by which I had become conscious of my "self." The proper philosophical relation to reality is that of contemplation as Plato and Aristotle recognized. However, to

contemplate reality is not to interact with it as if it were one object among many objects. Reality is not an object in itself. To assume that every concrete object is constituted as a necessary self-contained reality is to reject the possibility of evolution and remain within a static Hellenist mind-set. I am, however, conscious of a dynamic reality through the various phenomena that are disclosed to me as I evolve. In classical philosophy the mind belongs to the category of a static being. It is a "thing" in itself, something to be possessed by a knower. In fact, in my earliest contemplation I believed that my mind and my being were distinct and often acting apart from each other.

I once believed that pre-determined ideas created my meaning, presuming such ideas were pre-determined by the nature of the mind as Kant thought, or by the nature of being, as the pre-Kantian Hellenist philosophers thought. The dehellenization of my belief means the rejection of my previous Hellenic philosophy and the substitution of another more appropriate philosophy. The term dehellenization is not simply a negative, however. It is not un-hellenization. In strictly positive terms I undertake dehellenization as a positive action for the future of my belief. Through my intellectual history, I have come to understand that the contemplative task to which philosophy calls me is not the dismantling and subsequent reconstruction of a new system of metaphysics, but rather the complete transcending of metaphysics of the Hellenist type. It is understandable that St. Thomas thought that the scholastic way of thinking was the only intelligent way of thinking given his intellectual context. I am, however, conscious of the fact that there is no necessary philosophical methodology required of me to differentiate myself within reality. As well, there is no philosophical methodology of differentiating myself within reality that is natural or privileged.

A phenomenological methodology does have, however, the advantage that it interprets my belief holistically. That is to say that I am conscious that the traditional understanding of believing is insufficient in the contemporary context. I may overcome this insufficiency via a faith that seeks understanding, or through a philosophy of the theological type. But the problem is that it is not easy, in light of what the future may bring, to give a concrete present shape to my belief. Since I live in a human community, must I suppose that the concrete form of my belief be the same as everyone else? The answer is no. Although I am conscious that I possess a unique creative freedom,

I must not presume that this freedom is the same for all others. They will have their unique experiences of freedom and their respective outcomes of belief.

Dehellenization and Remembering/Re-conceptualizing

Generally, I find that I am first conscious of what I do to my environment before I am conscious of what my environment does to me. The capacity to be conscious of what nature, or my environment is doing to me is a capacity that comes with growth in maturity. This means that I need to create (fabricate) a philosophy that will be suitable to my increasingly mature theological thinking which gives proper expression to my understanding of God's influence upon me. Given that my philosophical need is for education rather than information, such education requires a re-conceptualized understanding of the relationship to my community and to the world. I need to re-conceptualize myself, my place in my community and in the world, all in light of my remembered past. In this process of re-conceptualization, or education, in light of my remembered past, what I am conscious of are phenomena that manifest themselves, not the essence of those phenomena. When I remember or talk about the world, that is, my environment or nature, I determine a relationship to it. In this relationship I do not merely *relate* to nature, or my environment, but I *self-relate* to nature and my environment. That is, I relate to it by active choice, not by passive accident. In my remembering I become related to nature, or my environment as a self, that is, as a subject that is not only related to nature but knows the action by which he is related to nature. My remembering has been thus re-conceptualized to reflect this understanding.

This re-conceptualization which is a perpetual activity of self-reflection occurs on a daily basis. This, however, does not mean that I somehow remember the truth of my previous experience and present it through a process of duplication in my mind. Even though a particular memory may be common to any philosopher, the re-conceptualization of it is not necessarily the same for all philosophers. Re-conceptualizing is that quality of the active mind which accounts for the fact that the more I actually know the more I potentially know. Thus, when I re-conceptualize, I enlarge the horizon of my consciousness. That means that were I to insist upon any pre-given conceptual and cultural form of religious remembering it would prevent the enlargement of my conscious horizon. This would be prejudicial to me since this pre-given form of religious remembering would then

obscure any new meaning which might be found in merely remembering my experience. I hold that new meaning is likely to be found in my conscious re-conceptualization of my experience. In short, my recall of the facts requires new interpretation in the present. Since any previous experience I had was not of necessity, it requires perpetual re-interpretation as my experience is re-conceptualized. Phenomenological re-conceptualizing is a subjective activity. Recollection of memory is an objective activity characteristic of Hellenistic thinking. Through the re-conceptualizing of my past relationships, I emerge from the world in which I previously existed. In merging into the future, I situate my self in a new life-world where my memory continues to develop. One of the consequences of this perpetual development is the heightening, deepening or expanding awareness of my consciousness. As a consequence, I cannot consciously remain within a Hellenist mind-set with respect to my belief in God. The Hellenist "future" which included the gods, was nothing but a remembered ideal past perpetually repeated. To the contrary, given my human freedom, my creation of a future for belief may well be re-conceptualized without, and possibly against, God. Thus, within my temporal existence I can create the sort of life-style in which there is no room for God and, as well, dispense with a morality that normally would concern me. The question arises whether it is advisable for me to re-conceptualize the world recalling its history in such a manner that the moral dilemmas of the past do not reoccur in the future.

Dehellenization and Watching and Waiting

Very few of the observations and concepts I contemplate in these pages are original. The fact is that most are not even new. What I am trying to accomplish here is the sort of task that philosophers have always undertaken. That is, to begin to arrange ideas into a single and insightful mosaic of a personal, but not private, comprehensive and unconventional synthesis. My explanation of this synthesis is contingent upon the diversity that aroused my consciousness for philosophy. I have rejected what I experienced to be an inadequate scholastic philosophy and have substituted in its place a new methodology for the creation (fabrication) of a theological philosophy for the future. By virtue of my historical memory, that is, my "that was then; this is now" consciousness, I possess an evolutionary understanding of the world that was not available to the ancient Hellenists.

I re-create myself by adjusting to my environment through a phenomenological philosophy that depends upon a non-classical understanding. It is characteristic of animal life that adjustment by the creature to its world is mediated through its senses. Unlike the brute animal, however, humans adjust by self-relating to a world that they perceive as substantially real. Many humans no longer conceive themselves as at the centre of the cosmos, but they do experience themselves as part of a technological, historical and environmental universe. Since Hellenistic philosophies were conceived in response to different problems and within a different world, they reflect differing interpretations of the human condition.

To my mind, co-creative evolution is the next stage of evolutionary development as a global phenomenon. Within co-creative evolution, in each new point of view or new level of consciousness, humans transcend their previous status. In this process I note that there is nothing in the universe or cosmos that tells us that it is organized to satisfy or fulfill our needs or preferences. Humanity has no evidence that any order and harmony of the universe or cosmos are intended for their sake as human beings. Rather, as co-creators in the universe, humanity must structure the order and harmony of the universe from chaos to cosmos to meet its needs. Phenomenological philosophy discloses that there appears to be no other parallel, alternative, or distinct world in which this is to happen. There is only the one cosmos in which we now live. It is in this world that humans co-create, through a process of differentiation, and self-differentiation as they watch and wait.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE CHURCH

These pages are intended for the somewhat impulsive, untutored reader who decides to read something different, to engage his or her mind with an unfamiliar topic, even given a limited or minimal knowledge of the topic. Therefore, without detailed introduction or philosophical orientation, I cut to the chase and raise a particular philosophical issue and ask the reader begin reading with an eye to his or her own convictions or beliefs on phenomenology in the church. That is, the notion of the church as mystery from the perspective of the Catholicity of Vatican II.

To begin, I remark on certain characteristics between quantitative language and qualitative language. Quantitative language is characteristic of classical philosophy, whereas qualitative language is characteristic of phenomenological philosophy. The suffixes "-ism" and "-ity" denoting classical and phenomenological languages respectively reflect this distinction. Funk and Wagnall's *Canadian College Dictionary* defines "-ism" as a suffix attached to nouns to mean "a distinctive theory, doctrine, or system: usually used disparagingly;" and "-ity" as a suffix attached to nouns to mean a "state, condition, or quality." The following pairs of terms, often used in contemporary discussions in philosophy and theology, illustrate this definition further: spiritualism vs. spirituality, materialism vs. materiality, personalism vs. personality, humanism vs. humanity, nationalism vs. nationality, historicism vs. historicity, Catholicism vs. Catholicity, individualism vs. individuality, modernism vs. modernity, dualism vs. duality, rationalism vs. rationality, moralism vs. morality, Deism vs. Deity, activism vs. activity, and pluralism vs. plurality. Since within contemporary English language usage words ending in "-ity" usually reflect a

phenomenological language and tend to be positive; whereas words ending in "-ism" reflect a classical language and tend to be negative, philosophers must take this distinction into account for accurate and precise thinking.

The essays in this book, reflecting phenomenology in the church, do not reflect a history of phenomenological religious thought. Nor have they been written in the form of a traditional catechism which characterizes the schools of scholastic theology. Rather, each essay is a philosophical reflection intended to reconstruct a contemporary philosophical point of view of pre-Vatican II and Vatican II concepts in light of Catholicity, not Catholicism. Although I present these issues from a Western Catholic philosophical point of view, my observations may be applied, *inter alia*, to the Western Christian tradition in general.

My investigation is undertaken from within the church. Since the church must be the *locus* of any study of theology given that there is no divine guarantee of the truth of revelation attached to isolated secular inquiry. I hold that there are limits to "Catholicism," the traditional concept, but what of "Catholicity," the phenomenological experience? Catholicism is limited by scholastic philosophy, whereas Catholicity is free from its constraints. Catholicity is limited only by human consciousness. The exercise of consciousness as a private activity within Christianity that distinguished Protestant from Catholic in pre-Vatican II times, no longer accurately defines the Protestant-Catholic divide. The fact is that within human consciousness both Protestants and Catholics participate in a phenomenological interpretation. A convert to Roman Catholicism in the Victorian era, George Tyrrell (1861-1909) noted that the Protestant believer accepted scripture as functioning as the supreme rule; whereas, the Catholic believer accepted the Church as functioning as the supreme rule. What unites their belief, I suggest, is that both had established a supreme rule through a phenomenological interpretation of experience.

Phenomenological philosophy, which has gained influence within Catholic philosophy since the Second Vatican Council, can be helpful in understanding the textual criticism of scripture. The scriptures, even as documents of revelation, are susceptible to the laws of textual criticism as is any historical text. In scripture studies textual criticism discloses the literary conventions of the era in which they were written. Although not a scripture scholar, George Tyrrell wrote: "We do

not ask if Socrates really said what Plato puts into his mouth; but we may rationally ask: 'Is Plato's Socrates the true Socrates? Similarly, we may not perhaps be justified in asking: Did Christ do or say all that the Fourth Gospel ascribes to him?' but only in asking: 'Is the Johannine Christ the true Christ — a true resetting and idealisation of Christ." [24] These are the significant questions which challenge the classical (quantitative) interpretation in our time.

The scriptures were not written as chronological history and cannot be used as any sort of "proof-text" to establish Jesus' divinity. In light of scriptural studies since 1900, I accept that the scriptures, of themselves, are an insufficient basis for the establishment of a clear fulfilment of prophecy. Referencing the Council of Florence (1431-1438) as a bench mark, George Tyrrell noted that all that was taught about dogmas, sacraments and Church government from the Roman Catholic point of view was accepted as being fully known to Peter and his successors. This pre-Vatican II view of the Church, which he criticized, is no longer tenable given the contemporary understanding of history and evolution.

It was evident to Tyrrell from the theological criticism of papal authority of the late 1800's that Church government had developed from a loose federation of democratic communities into a highly centralized and hierarchical structure in which all the teaching authority was becoming centralized in the pope and it appeared to him that the teaching authority of the ecumenical councils would likely be repressed. Tyrrell observed that the schoolmen of the day equated faith with the magisterium's orthodox teaching and they assumed that Christ's mission was primarily an educational one. These schoolmen argued that the church's magisterium must necessarily possess the same authority which Christ possessed in settling any doubts about his teaching and miracles. This view of the church's authority could only be maintained through a philosophical perspective that supported papal infallibility and which rejected any textual criticism of the scriptures and accepted only classical philosophy as legitimate.

Although not scripture, the first epistle of St Clement (circa 75-110) lays a foundation for the Catholic theological system, which scholastic scholars attempted to improve upon, in which the Church is conceived as a divine institution. It was conceived as an institution with officers whose

[24] *Church and the Future* 1910 Priory Press (p. 35) Tyrrell is asking: "Is the Johannine Christ a *vera icona*?"

duty was to settle ultimately questions solely by an official pronouncement — *Roma locuta; causa finita*. In this view, the officers of the Church are analogous to officers of the state whose purpose is to govern an institutional organization which was necessary to save Christendom from heterodoxy and disintegration. The concept of divine origin of the ecclesiastical organization originates in Catholicism, not Catholicity.

Today it is generally acknowledged by theologians and philosophers that textual criticism reveals that Jesus of Nazareth would never contemplate God's grace endorsing any form of Church or State government. Further, it is clear that the apostles believed that the end of the world would occur within their lifetime and they made no provision for any institutional church as we know it today. However, the spirit that animates the Church today is the same one that animated Jesus of Nazareth. This same spirit reveals an understanding of Catholicity, not Catholicism as constituting the ecclesial community today. In Tyrrell's thinking, Christ and the church are different and complementary organs of the spirit's own expression adapted to different phases of the same movement. Tyrrell's thinking discloses an understanding of Catholicity, rather than one of Catholicism, even though he writes unavoidably with the classical theological vocabulary current in the Catholicism of his day. The church, he noted, is designed to perpetuate and promote the revelation of the founder of the Christian movement, that is, Jesus of Nazareth. Tyrrell accepted that the church embodies a variation of the original revelation and never creates a new revelation. God, not the church, reveals insights to human consciousness. In that context a challenging philosophical insight, within contemporary Catholic theology, is that of *homo faber* vs. *homo creator,* that is, humanity the maker vs. humanity the creator. The former is a conscious organizer of cosmos out of chaos; by contrast the latter is a scholastic theological fiction. If Christian revelation has ceased with the death of the last apostle the difference between Catholicity and Catholicism becomes a significant interpretive question. Catholicity is primarily a way, or manner of life based on the life-style of Jesus of Nazareth. Catholicity is not a body of doctrine imparted to the Church *about* Jesus of Nazareth.

The spirit of the Christ, not Christology, is what has been revealed to the Church. This spirit of Christ, which has been embodied in the community of the faithful, is susceptible to phenomenological interpretation. The Spirit of the Christ incorporates the human knowledge at

hand in developing its doctrine and dogma. Given this embodiment the true teacher in the Church is the experience of the Spirit of the Christ, or the Holy Spirit, acting immediately in and through the whole body of the faithful. The Thomistic approach to theology, i.e., scholasticism did offer a particular approach to revelation from which future generations would benefit. Unfortunately, Aquinas did not pass on his inquisitive theological intellect, that is, his gifted insight concerning revelation to those who succeeded him. However, history and experience show that the spirit of Christ does animate the world outside official Thomism, albeit not in a scholastic manner. Human experience of the spirit may be outside the official visible Church, yet not outside the Church of Christ. A phenomenological philosophy of Catholicity may disclose an understanding of what Vatican II intended when it affirmed that the Church of Christ subsists in the Catholic Church (*Lumen Gentium*, Art. 8).

The present evolutionary stage in which Catholic philosophy finds itself (a Hellenized stage) no longer meets satisfactorily the needs of Christ's faithful. We live in an age of societal and cultural change which continues throughout the entire globe. Such societal and cultural change has philosophical and theological implications for Christ's faithful. Their faith tells them that they are to be saved as an individual person and that human society (not just the church) is to be renewed within this same process of salvation. Christ's faithful search for a better world often without seeking a better philosophical explanation than the one they have inherited. Ironically, this search for a better world has led some theologians to abandon (mistakenly so) their inherited faith and become atheists in order to improve their lives and the lives of those around them. Having abandoning the faith sincere atheists offer a challenge to believers as part of a theological evolutionary process. A phenomenological understanding of human nature as evolutionary is in the process of replacing the classical concept of human nature as static. This replacement presents new problems for philosophy and theology which call for a new analysis. In a new Christian analysis the classical solutions are replaced by existential solutions and not by atheistic philosophical conclusions however legitimate they may seem to be.

Human society, through its constitution, suggests that human beings are destined for a higher than mere animal life. The sense of a higher purpose in human life originates within this world of incardinated individuals, not outside of this world in some metaphysical ideal world. In a theology

of the philosophical type individual humans are at the centre and summit of *earthly* life whose embodied presence extends beyond the physical boundaries of their earthly life. This will not likely change even in the posthuman computerized/digitalized world of humanity.

Many theologians today undertake a philosophy of the theological type to establish a credibility of unity (not union) for contemporary and future generations of the faithful. The faithful are composed of individuals bonded to each other. This bond is nothing less than the divine life experienced in the world. For the Christian, it is the spirit of the risen Christ which initiates this bond and calls all the faithful to form the new people of God, not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit (1 Cor. 11:25). "According to the flesh" signifies the temporally constituted People of God, whereas "according to the spirit" signifies the transcendentally disclosed People of God. In other words, the church has evolved, and is evolving, in our understanding from a historical entity constituted in time (quantitative) to a phenomenological entity constituted in consciousness (qualitative). In a phenomenological understanding, life (i.e. posthuman agency) the church is firstly salvific, and secondarily political or social institution. That is to say the salvific life of the church is not of necessity connected to any one particular culture or social system. This salvific mysterious life (agency) transcends history in phenomenological understanding, yet is incarnated in history. By its life, the church is universal and not through its structures. Hence, it can create a very close bond between the peoples on the globe provided they trust each other in freedom.

Philosophers and theologians are recognizing the development of a new age in human history. In this new age they conceive themselves as agents of cultural change that effect their understanding of the church. This new understanding continues to remain problematic even after Vatican II. The faithful continue to discern the presence of God in the changes brought about through *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento*. [25] One problem arising from *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento* is how to consciously recognize the place of the individual in the phenomenological church in contrast to the classical church. In the phenomenological understanding of the constitution of the church, the priesthood of the faithful and the hierarchical priesthood are organically distinguishable but not separated. These priestly offices differ

25. *Ressourcement*: a return to the sources, which implies less centralization by Rome; *aggiornamento*: the process of bringing an institution or organization up to date. Some Catholic theologians consider these as opposing terms.

ontologically (functionally) and each is a particular conscious activity recognized either as a phenomenological, or juridical entity.

Phenomenological philosophy makes it possible for philosophers and theologians to reflect upon themselves and upon God' s revelation in a manner that was previously unthinkable and not even possible within scholasticism. It is only philosophy which affects the conscience of individuals and allows them to make real the meaning of God's agency in their lives. A theological philosophy allows for inter-subjectivity, that is, a phenomenological philosophy of divine-human consciousness. As I see it theological philosophy discloses the deeper wisdom God's presence in the church of our day.

PREOCCUPATIONS OF A THEOLOGICAL PHILOSOPHY

A theological philosophy contemplates the physical presence as well as the noetic presence (consciousness) of the individual, whereas, classical philosophy speculates about physical presence and an ideal essence in the Platonic sense. A goal of a theological philosophy is to reach "God without God." A theology of the philosophical type has its origin as early as the Enlightenment (an intellectual movement of the late 17th and 18th centuries) in the revised understanding of the "natural man" of scholasticism. However, a more recent preoccupation arising from the movement concerns me here.

Theological Philosophy and the Modernist Movement

Modernist theological thought developed within the philosophical hermeneutic popularized in Europe and England about 1900 that viewed tradition and dogma as being historical expressions of religious experience. Modernist philosophers insisted upon the importance of religious phenomena as the starting point of understanding revelation in the broadest sense. George Tyrrell (1861-1909) in theology and Alfred Loisy (1857-1940) in scripture were significant representatives of Modernist thinking and their theological criticism consisted of evaluating the inherited expressions of religious interpretation of their time. [26] Tyrrell and Loisy lived in the age of a Catholic theological magisterium inaugurated by Leo XIII. Confronted with a modern world, which had evolved outside of Christendom, the official Catholic hierarchy eventually ceased its

[26] Loisy remarked: *Jésus annonçait le Royaume et c'est l'Église qui est venue.*

practice of excommunicating those philosophers and theologians who held alternative views to the magisterium and began trying to understand them. Modernist theologians, in contrast to classical theologians, wanted to follow the thinking of the more innovative Western philosophers some of whom sought a *ressourcement*, that is, a return to the sources of revelation and tradition. Such was George Tyrrell's and Alfred Loisy's intent and thrust. In returning to the source of revelation and tradition, *ressourcement* permitted thinking in a particular intellectual perspective viewed from an historical and evolutionary experience. [27] However, in Tyrrell's thinking there was one important exception to the general notion of *ressourcement*. Rather than expect the Church to embrace science, history and evolve accordingly, Tyrrell expected science and history to embrace revelation (the Church) and they would thus evolve, or be interpreted within the light of Christ. [28]

Leo XIII (18191903) was a pope, supremely gifted in political understanding and in the diplomatic approach. He was a traditionalist and a conservative who thought in modern terms and spoke in the modern idiom, and whose long reign was the beginning of a new age of Catholic history. To my mind, many Catholic Christians today remain, in their thinking, at the beginning stage of Pope Leo's reign. However, many believers missed the opportunity to progress to the new perspective of theological inquiry that the Modernist movement had initiated. In the classical perspective theological questions and answers have come to be determined within a fixed idea of the truth. The classical understanding of truth as expressed in theoretical terms has become so fixed in a particular philosophy that it was perceived to be as valid as the truth itself. Leading up to the scholastic method of interpretation philosophers and theologians were not aware of this aberration in which the means had become equivalent to the ends. That aberration led to interpretive mistakes being made. Such fixity in expression is not a problem within a theological philosophy. In a philosophy of the theological type concepts have no independent existence apart from the consciousness of individuals and thus there is no necessity for them to become fixed in an independent system of thought. The fixed system of thought does remain a problem for scholastic philosophers and theologians. This problem, however, is not reserved to the discipline of philosophy. This same problem of fixed concepts has developed in the modern scientific

[27] God is the only *source* of revelation. Tradition and scripture are *modes* of revelation.
[28] Tyrrell did not accept the dualism characteristic of religion vs science, but accepted the duality of faith and knowledge. The former is confrontational; the latter is collaborative.

disciplines and is easily demonstrated to be the case in much contemporary psychology. The new understanding presented by consciousness within a theological philosophy describes a relational and dynamic conception of truth that replaces the fixed ideal concept of truth. A theological philosophy is original theology in the sense that the phenomenological method presents a new consciousness for theological inquiry. Philosophers and theologians may undertake this new inquiry but whether or not the phenomenologists of Religious Studies have grasped what newness is revealed by these methods is debatable.

To be fair, however, it can be argued that theological philosophy incorporates insights from both rational and poetic thought. The disclosures of theological philosophy are not only rationally interpreted but also may be poetically expressed. Particular philosophical and poetical disclosures vary and depend upon the subject's interpretive and comprehensive ability. The variety of disclosures, philosophical or poetical, introduces new thresholds for Western theology. All new perspectives may be interpreted through an existential phenomenological understanding which provides alternative interpretations to the classical interpretive perspective of the West. Phenomenological philosophy helps make clear that the Western classical perspective is decreasingly viable and useful since contemporary Western culture is no longer Hellenist. Many of us can attest from our personal experience that the current method of integrating the Greek philosophical heritage into our life-world has failed in constructing an adequate future for belief.

As I see it, in contemporary thinking a renaissance is occurring, as it were, as the phenomenological philosophical method discloses new thresholds for a theological philosophical interpretation within Western culture. I suggest that many theologians, both inside and outside the Roman Catholic Church, are hopeful that contemporary theistic theology is on the verge of a similar synthesis that might rival Thomism. Such a synthesis would need to be contingent upon the abandonment of a Hellenistic theoretical foundation. There is sufficient evidence in classical speculative theology and popular devotional theology to suggest that these traditional interpretations are being replaced, i.e., devotional religious symbols seen only as jewelry. Plurality (heterodoxy) has always been present in theology. Today, this plurality is clearly evident given the absence of a universal philosophy to support theology. Many critical thinkers in the West perceive that institutions and customs are no longer given from on high as once was the case. Historical,

geographical and human agencies all play a part in shaping the cultural, social and intellectual environment of the contemporary human life-world. Also, the number of theologians accepting that there is no transcendental someone, external to experience, determining the affairs of this life, is increasing. However, that that "someone," while not external, may be immanent within human experience, is gaining favour. A contemporary philosophical perception, a correct one, I believe, is that many factors work in conjunction with our own practical efforts in determining the affairs of this life. A way forward, I suggest, is through a philosophy of the theological type.

Three Phenomenological Preoccupations of a Theological Philosophy

1st Preoccupation: Universal Meaning Shifts to Particular Interpretation

Within Western theology debate has moved from the universal question of God as object of religious language, which is an issue of classical interpretation, to the radical question of God as the object of religious discourse which is an issue of particular meaning. In this discourse the interpreter is part of the interpretation, not a mere observer of fact. In short, phenomenological theological discourse presents a new perspective of meaning for humans to assign to their experience. Pope John Paul II encouragingly seems to give approval to phenomenological philosophy when he writes: "In gaining some distance from positivistic convictions, contemporary thought has made notable advances toward the ever more complete discovery of man, recognizing among other things the value of metaphorical and symbolic language. Contemporary hermeneutics, examples of which are found in the work of Paul Ricoeur [29] or, from a different perspective, in the work of Emmanuel Lévinas [30] presents the truth about man and the world from new angles." [31] In philosophical awareness, or self-consciousness, a co-responsible and co-creative relationship becomes evident through a phenomenological understanding of one's life-world. This is significant because human individuals identify themselves as co-responsible and co-creative agents in a relationship with that which whose purpose is divine. [32] This cannot be the case in the

[29] Ricoeur (1913-2005) concluded through his philosophy that studying human reality requires the combination of phenomenological description with hermeneutic interpretation.
[30] Lévinas (1906-1995) was a philosopher who developed an original interpretation of Edmund Husserl's (1859-1938) phenomenological method.
[31] *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, Knopf Publishers 2005
[32] Cf. *Dei Verbum*, (Art. 2)

classical approach that some Roman Catholic theologians continue to maintain in which created individuals surrender to a God-directed purpose within the world. In a classical approach, an understanding of co-responsibility and co-creatorship is not tenable since creatures are distinct from and less than their creator. Also, many Roman Catholic theologians still believe that since humanity possesses a fixed nature, like all created things it is heading toward a pre-determined perfection and improvement. Within a phenomenological approach, however, co-responsibility and co-creatorship are tenable since creatures are differentiated from an unstructured reality, yet not independent of that reality. That is, they constitute an ontological relationship of unity (not union).

My suspicion is that many contemporary philosophers view the understanding of the co-creator relationship as being characteristic of a New Age consciousness and may not treat it seriously. That is, they view it as somewhat heretical. However, the co-creator relationship arises from an evolution in philosophical consciousness as a new threshold of existential preoccupation. The co-creator relationship is not simply a novelty within classical thought. Rather, the co–creator relationship assigns a new and particular perception to theological inquiry seeking meaning to a believer's experience.

As a product of evolution such theological inquiry determines a new kind of insightful and meaningful experience. This new experience is not of a difference of *degree* in knowledge, but a difference of *kind* in knowing. In this type of knowing, humans consciously express their participatory role in the religious interpretation of their life-world. It must be recalled that classical theological understanding does not falsify human interpretations. Rather, classical theological understanding is inadequate for the contemporary existential interpretive task. Phenomenological theology is not an exercise of placing propositions and drawing conclusions as philosophy has been understood since pre-modern times. According to Brian Gaybba theology had become by the 12th Century "a distinct subject in which an individual could only be declared proficient after having passed through a defined course of instruction and performed satisfactorily in an examination." [33] In phenomenological theology, there is no universal hermeneutic, no clear method, no set of rules to secure a definite interpretation and understanding of religious

[33] *God's Wisdom and Human Reason* 1998 University of South Africa Press (p. 35)

experience. However, there is a relational understanding (an assignment of meaning) to religious experience in the particular existential *locus* in which the individual believer resides.

2nd Preoccupation: Classical Epistemology Shifts to Phenomenological Consciousness

Here I note the philosophical shift from classical epistemological thinking to conscious phenomenological thinking. When humans ask questions about their belief that no science or technology can answer, they may become less certain about their knowledge, but more flexible in their understanding so that a theological philosophy can take advantage of this new situation of flexibility. In this philosophical shift, from a static (classical) understanding to a participatory (phenomenological) understanding subjectivism is not to be confused with subjectivity. Subjectivism and its counterpart, objectivism, denote concrete doctrines or systems of knowledge, whereas subjectivity and its counterpart, objectivity, are qualitative notions connoting a phenomenological and relational interpretation of one's life-world.

Theologians interpret their experience of the life-world according to the epistemological norms of their period. Thomas Aquinas, whose interpretation was greatly influenced by Aristotle, teaches that human knowledge comes through one's innate capacity to know, as well as, through one's experience. In the table below I juxtapose particular religious preoccupations that illustrate the difference between classical understanding and phenomenological understanding with respect to theism. The God-preoccupation is in the centre of the table with the contrasting understandings on either side.

Table 1.

CLASSICAL (Knowledge)	GOD EXPERIENCE (Theism)	PHENOMENOLOGICAL (Experience)
In the beginning	as creator	As co-creator
Ransom for sin (Jesus)	as redeemer	Through a way of living
Through grace	as offering a new creation	Via an indwelling presence
As revelation	in the church	As a spirit-filled people
In heaven	as offering salvation	Human community on earth
Through legal norms	as moral agent	Through personal values

In contrast to classical thought, theological philosophy does not inquire into the "structure" of the essence of objective reality. Rather, theological philosophy discloses the "structure" of the essence of subjective reality. That is, theological philosophy discloses a noetic reality that originates in the mind (from the Greek: *nous* – mind), or, stated alternatively, reality that appears to consciousness. Classical philosophy posits that a true, absolute being, one who is all-powerful, all-knowing and transcendent, personally presides over and exists above the temporal world, imparting knowledge to the knower. In classical philosophy created beings lack the potential for any essential development or true evolution. That is, created beings must undergo change through accidents (a type of architectural development.) This contrasts with phenomenological philosophy which is conscious of a historical and evolutionary understanding of human growth.

3rd Third Preoccupation: Convictional Language Shifts to Confessional Language

The language of a theological philosophy is confessional language of a special type, that is, a language of belief, but it is not necessarily convictional language, that is, a language of knowledge. That is to say, convictional language expresses firm knowledge, whereas confessional language acknowledges belief, firm or otherwise. Convictional language is unique due to its demonstrable character. Convictional language is based on rational philosophical understanding. Confessional language, however, is a conscious statement of what is actually believed, although not always demonstrable. Theistic theological language understood in a confessional, phenomenological manner, shifts the threshold of interpretation from demonstrable language based on Hellenistic metaphysics (theory) to participatory language, based on phenomenological relationships (experience). Thus, from a phenomenological point of view, Bishop Berkley's (1685-1753) famous observation *esse est percipi*, that is, being is perception, is better rendered *esse est referri*, that is, being is relational, as suggested by Leslie Dewart. [34] *Esse est referri* is preferred in a theological philosophy since a person enters into a self-conscious relationship with others.

[34] *Evolution and Consciousness: The Role of Speech in the Origin and Development of Human Nature* University of Toronto Press 1989

A theological philosophy requires a shift to conscious experience from theoretical knowledge by each individual in his or her culture. Despite its reservations about a theological philosophy, the Second Vatican Council did more than tolerate a phenomenological and existential understanding of the pastoral, or social interpretations in its documents. The Council's pastoral constitution, *Gaudium et Spes,* (Art 62) acknowledges that the recent studies and findings of science, history, and philosophy do raise new questions which influence life and demand new theological investigations. Some Catholic theologians have maintained that Vatican II subscribed to phenomenology as its dominant method of understanding. Other Catholic theologians make a stronger statement in that the Council itself was self-consciously an exercise in the phenomenological method of interpreting church doctrine. [35]

However, in what seems to be a later preemptory move towards phenomenological understanding, Pope John Paul II writes in *Veritatis Splendor*, 1993 (Art. 4) that: "in particular, note should be taken on the *lack of harmony between the traditional response of the Church and certain theological positions* ... these being left to the judgment of the individual subjective conscience or to the diversity of social and cultural contexts" [John Paul's italics]. It appears that John Paul's encyclical cautions against the phenomenological method of interpreting the experience of the individual believer since it lacks universal standardization. However, in my reading of the Encyclical, it is individualism, not individuality, to which he is opposed in whatever philosophical or social context it appears. Classical Roman Catholic theology in its contemporary Thomistic form is unable to present an adequate individuality for the posthuman context. In light of contemporary human experience, an insight peculiar to the phenomenological method is that knowledge arises within personal and conscious activity. It is not acquired or apprehended from outside the knower. In a phenomenological understanding to know is to be conscious. A competing philosophy, Neo scholasticism preserves the classical thought of ancient Greece. To my mind, the new philosophical renaissance which seems to be occurring in Western theological thinking will continue (although gradually) preparing the way for theological philosophy to replace classical theology. [36]

[35] It is to be recalled that the Council was a Pastoral one, not a Dogmatic one.

[36] This was the focus of my D.Th. thesis, University of South Africa 1996 entitled "A Phenomenological Understanding of Certain Liturgical Texts: The Anglican Collects for Advent and the Roman Catholic Collects for Lent."

A PERSONAL PROCESS OF CONSTRUCTING A THEOLOGICAL PHILOSOPHY

No one in philosophy is ever completely original, obviously. That is to say, “there is nothing new under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 1:4-11). The idea of philosophical originality is practically a contradiction in terms. However, as a unique thinker I place myself within an existing current of philosophical thought and must incorporate something of the history of my predecessors in my own originality. In my process of constructing a theological philosophy, I contrast philosophy of a theological type with the philosophy and theology of a classical type which is inordinately influenced by Ancient Greek philosophical concepts. The academic world of philosophy continually becomes more diverse in its theological interpretation and this affects the religious life-world of believers.

My thoughts are linked to an earlier age in philosophical thinking and I recognize that present day theological problems result from an impeded and incomplete development of the so-called Modernist Crisis of a not-so-long-ago age. My theological philosophy consciously engages God’s revelation within the *ecclesia* which itself is formed by being “called out” of the general population and cultural milieu in response to a divine summons. The social process of being “called out” in response to a divine summons gives theological philosophy a unique opportunity to interpret God’s reality (presence). All social institutions are a means whereby individuals are able to relate to each other. Family, government, church, agriculture, trade, etc. are examples. And the decay or the

growth of any one of these institutions will have a corresponding effect on the individuals making up that institution. Theological philosophy cannot be constructed in a self–defensive and self-isolating context that is characteristic of decay. Rather, it needs a constructive and supportive context that is characteristic of growth.

A theological philosophy develops in a specifically religious context which is proper to human beings, Christian and non-Christian. It possesses its own conscious (subjective) worth with respect to knowledge and human action. My theological philosophy engages emotion, feelings and intuition and enables me to encounter that which is spiritual and beyond my sensible experience. But that does not mean that such spirituality is "out of this world." Such a theological philosophy meets my needs when: 1) its purpose originates in my actual experience, 2) its purpose is related to my environmental contents, 3) its purpose is to serve my spiritual growth.

A closing word from Leslie Dewart:

> The doctrine of St. Thomas, true enough as it was, is dead. But it is not as dead as a doornail. It is dead as a venerable ancestor is dead, who begat an existence which begat ours in turn, and to whom we owe our consciousness and life. Ancestors are to be neither cursed and forgotten, nor left unburied and mummified in case they may suddenly find it possible to come back to the world. They are to be gratefully and regretfully buried; they are to be truthfully and honourably remembered, and their truth and virtue is to be perpetuated, not in the vain attempt to resuscitate them, but in the conscious exercise of our own descendant but independent life.

THINKING THROUGH FAITH

Some Philosophical Convictions of Leslie Dewart

(Canada's Forgotten Catholic Philosopher)

This exposé of Dewart's own thoughts and reflections as extracted from three of his published works arising from his PhD thesis: *Christianity and Revolution*, *Future of Belief*, and *Foundations of Belief* represent a significant contribution to Christian, and in particular Catholic theology. While Dewart was not a theologian in any sense, his philosophy lays a new foundation for contemporary thinking that does not rely on the traditional epistemological foundation of Hellenic philosophy. His philosophical insights are a conscious, reflective "transposition to another key" of the experience of the Christian faith. I begin with a consideration of his PhD thesis, followed by a discussion on his books whose insights have evolved beyond that of his thesis.

◄ ►

Development of Karl Pearson's Scientific Philosophy (PhD, U. of T. 1954)

Who was Karl Pearson? Karl Pearson (1857-1936) was a British statistician and interpreter of the philosophy and social role of science. He was brought up in the Church of England, although as an adult adhered to the "Freethought Movement," and identified with his Quaker ancestry. In 1875 Pearson won a scholarship to enter the University of Cambridge. During his college years he lost his religious faith and subsequently studied German philosophy and literature. In the Abstract to his thesis Dewart wrote:

> Since his undergraduate days Pearson was keenly interested in religion, and he seems to have been especially affected by the opposition of science and religion current in the thought of his time. Pearson held that science had effectively shown that revealed religion could not rightly claim to possess truth. But he also held that man has certain religious needs which science as such can neither deny nor satisfy. Hence, his problem was to find a 'creed of life,' a set of basic truths and moral axioms which would harmonize religious feeling and reason.

Dewart shows that Pearson initially believed that knowledge is identical to virtue and religion, but eventually came to believe that science is the only reliable knowledge base for religious and moral thought. That is, deliverance from sin and the salvation of mankind lie in scientific knowledge. Pearson sought to show that science must somehow *transcend* the dichotomy of matter and mind, subject and object through the identification of phenomena (being) and reality. In his attempt he sought a "creed of life" for personal guidance and peace of mind. From a philosophical perspective in his thesis, Dewart details the development of Pearson's quest in the context of Pearson's time. This development, Dewart advised, will help one understand the man before his name disappears from philosophical memory.

Pearson lived during the time of hot debate between science and religion, when evolution appeared to conclusively refute the traditional religious doctrines. Pearson, not being from an overly-devout background, but from a "stock of Dissenters," as he wrote, thought that it was impossible to hold simultaneously to the theory of evolution and the traditional Christian faith. How to harmonize and integrate religion and science was the problem. Part of the problem, Dewart emphasizes, is the incorrect grasp of the meaning of science which must understand itself before it can be reconciled with religion. Religion, likewise, has forgotten its true nature and, having set itself against science, has lost the contest and fell into disrepute. For Pearson, the solution to this contest remains a matter of human preoccupation and will occupy him all during his life.

According to Dewart's assessment of Pearson's scientific philosophy, Christianity has neglected humanity's welfare for the sake of its own theology by relying too heavily on the Greek philosophy it had inherited. Therefore, science must enlighten philosophy and attempt to account for the universe without the use of religious concepts. Pearson sought to give future humanity a religion worthy of its intellect, and science was to be the vehicle to achieve this. Ultimately, for Pearson, his philosophy of statistical induction became his answer to what was essentially a religious problem in Dewart's estimation. (Throughout his career Dewart will attempt his own *philosophical* answer to what he viewed as essentially a religious problem as evidenced in his posthumously published, *Hume's Challenge and the Renewal of Modern Philosophy*.)

What is significant in Pearson's thought is the unity of method in science, not its content. The method of science leads to knowledge. Thus, scientific philosophy (not a philosophy of science) does not lead to poetry, metaphysics, mythology, or fantasy. The practicality of science, however, implies a certain usefulness to theology. After investigating the development of Pearson's scientific philosophy, Dewart concludes that science affords a possible *description* of the future, but not an *explanation* of what the future will be.

Three particular convictions that formed the core for Dewart's books identified earlier arose from his investigation of Pearson's scientific philosophy. They are: 1) The order of the world is not fashioned by the nature of the mind. Causes are at play other than the mind. 2) The regularity of events implies law, but critical reflection indicates otherwise. 3) The essence of reality is "to appear" via the senses. These three convictions may be detected in the three volumes mentioned and as continually re-surfacing throughout Dewart's career.

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CHRISTIANITY AND REVOLUTION: The Lesson of Cuba (1963)

This is an essay in political philosophy according to Dewart and "two questions underlie every problem raised in this study: One is philosophical, the other theological. From the point of view of Christian philosophy, the question is that of the nature of human freedom. From the point of view of Christian theology, it is that of the nature of the Church." [37] Dewart makes no mention of *Pacem in Terris* (Encyclical of Pope John XXIII) [38] since his book was at the publisher at the time of the Encyclical's release. Dewart presents the Cuban revolution as a reflection of the status of the universal church with respect to needed reform.

The interaction of free and responsible individuals was the cause of Cuba's revolution. And free and responsible individuals will ultimately be responsible for revolution within the church

[37] p. 275

[38] *Pacem in Terris* issued on 11 April 1963 on the rights and obligations of individuals and of the state, as well as the proper relations between states, concerns themes Dewart address in this book.

universal, for better or worse, Dewart suggests. There is a similarity between Cuban Christians and the Christian faithful at large in that both are indifferent to the institutions of religion. Such indifference results in an alienation between the laity and the clergy within the institutional church. After detailed discussion Dewart concludes that it was a matter of conscience that began the conflict between the revolutionaries and the Church. The implication is that legitimate attempts at reform of land ownership led nowhere since the reforming revolutionaries found no support from an intransigent church that looked only to its past as a stabilizing agent for classical civilization. In light of this he writes: "What we need to ask ourselves is what was the nature of the Cuban Church's implicit ecclesiology, particularly in what concerns the sanctity of the Church; whether that ecclesiology is the only possible one within orthodoxy; whether it is adequate, and finally, whether we wish to share it or not." [39] The Church misunderstands itself in the modern age due to the lack of knowledge of its own historical development which has generated the present condition. Thus, the Church's challenge is: "How shall the Body of Christ as it ages and matures, and as it finally comes to its childhood's end, adapt to an emerging world-wide civilization, … adapt to a civilization which liquidates not only the medieval, but also the 'modern' post-medieval world along with its own foundations in the cultural forms inherited from the classical Greco-Roman world." [40] This challenge incorporates a spiritual dimension that is understood as a divine mission to humanity. In a world that liquidates its cultural forms, "What must be feared is not so much that the gentiles shall reject the Church bodily as that the Church may not spiritually conquer the gentiles." [41] In short, the church as traditionally understood will become irrelevant to the various human cultures of our post-medieval world.

The crisis that precipitated the revolution is that current Christian cultures are universally reaching the end of a spiritual stage. The end of this Christian spiritual stage is occurring so rapidly that institutions have had no time to adjust — hence they have become obsolete, particularly religious institutions. For Dewart the solution to the crisis is to be found within the mind of humanity, not the institutions of humanity. Our minds are "all we have of ourselves to do God's bidding, and what we need to use, even with grace." [42] Our problem then, is not merely of how to correct the

[39] p. 180
[40] P. 183
[41] P. 185
[42] P. 193

past, but how to plan for the future. Physical revolution is not sufficient unless accompanied by a change of mind. We must realize that we live in a world which, "we must now commit ourselves for longer, with ever fewer opportunities of later changing our minds. … We are not simply the actors on a historical stage already set: We are the creators of a whole world to come." [43] The idea that connects the Cuban revolution and the Church in a common context is, "that although the Church is not of the world, the world is of the Church." [44] Even if this world of the Church is distant from the Christian believer, it is never an alien place. Christians are incarnated into this world of the Church. That is why, "We do not want the world to embrace the Church; we want the Church to embrace the world." [45]

The weight of the Church's history works against it in the modern context. Many contemporary Christians are unaware of this perspective and how it inhibits the Church's role in the modern world. Therefore, "The most urgent and immediate task for the Christian is to become aware of the present age of the Church; thus, the immediate task for us is intelligent self-examination and self-criticism" [46] which are the conditions for spiritual and temporal human growth. For spiritual and temporal human growth to take place an understanding of this growth must take into account a culture's theory of knowledge. Historically, all the events we can know could have been otherwise than they actually were. This gives the church a reason to believe that, in Cuba's case, "if communism is wrong, then precisely because it is such, what we should do to it is not destroy it, but do what it cannot do for itself, namely, make it find its proper perfection, and its proper truth." [47] In other words, the Church is to be the leaven in the loaf of society. This accounts for the fact that initially Fidel Castro and the ecclesiastical authorities were in accord, according to Dewart. So much so that the contemporary challenge of the day for Christianity at large was to extend this unique Cuban experience of integration of Church and revolution to the universal context of Church and humanity. History shows that this integration failed. "To live by ideals is the best that pagans [i.e., Hellenistic philosophers] can do: It is not even the least that Christians are required to achieve." [48] What Cuban Christians are required to do, then, opens the door to

[43] p. 194
[44] P. 195
[45] P. 196
[46] P. 199
[47] P. 217
[48] p. 278

understanding the role of the Church in the Cuban revolution. Pagans live by philosophical ideals because they are bound by the notion of fate, Dewart observes. However, Christians are fate-less, not bound by pre-existing philosophical ideals to which they must conform. Therefore, change is possible. From a moral perspective within the Cuban revolutionary context Dewart believes that to do the right thing Christians must enquire into what they have to do to bring into existence what does not yet exist. They must start from the actual condition in life, that is, existentially, the one in which they find themselves as being related to God and relating to God. Cubans live out their lives historically in a fallen and redeemed world, and as free agents. This is the reason that moral problems arise out of exercising their consciousness and subjectivity. Cuba's moral problems do not arise from the island's historical context of political conquest. In short, the problem is not with Cuba but with Cubans who are responsible for their choices, Dewart believes. Since this view of moral responsibility can be universalized there is "a lesson to be learned from the Cuban situation: 'Justice today cannot obtain among nations unless it takes place within the unity of the human race; the concept of political justice itself must be recast in order to mean not an approximation to an ideal reality, but the concretization of human fraternity.'" [49] In other words, a *Pax Romana* is inadequate for contemporary human needs, nor will it work for future generations. Rather, the *Pax Romana* must be replaced by the *Pax Christiana*. As Dewart notes, "the time has come, therefore, for Christianity to create its own cultural forms. No doubt, this creation, required by the development of our history, demands by its very nature continuity with tradition: There is no material out of which to create the Christian cultural forms of the future except our past and our history." [50]

This task, in fact, falls to the church, Dewart suggests. "It may be that to make peace, to work towards the making of an unprecedented world without war and, thus, to begin and to create a united, catholic world under the sponsorship of the Catholic faith, is the political vocation offered by history to collective *ecclesiastical* Christianity in our time" [Dewart's italics]. [51] Significantly, I think, Dewart wrote *ecclesiastical,* not *ecclesial.* This notion of *ecclesial* Christianity was not yet put forward successfully by Vatican II when he wrote. It can be argued that his thinking remained

[49] P. 284
[50] P. 286
[51] p. 287

somewhat pre-conciliar which allowed him to suggest, in the Cuban context at least, a type of political paralysis concerning change. "Our fears and our delusions of persecution prevent us from following through even in our own minds." [52] The true role of the Cuban Christian faithful in their future had yet to be determined. Creating a future of belief requires hard work by the individual and the community. As Dewart has expressed it: "it is surely not for nothing that talent has come to mean principally intellectual endowment. Catholic intellectuals who are not ready to make their talent fructify can always chose any equally noble, but less arduous, less responsible, way of Christian life." [53] The "dry rot" within the university halls, [i.e., Catholic intellectuals] and by extension to the ecclesiastical hierarchy, is not to be underestimated, Dewart maintains. This conviction is explored further in his next book.

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THE FUTURE OF BELIEF: Theism in a World Come of Age (1966)

The *Future of Belief*, attempts to satisfactorily integrate Christian belief with the everyday experience of our age. This problem may be misconceived by us if we rely on the traditional religious perspective. Our contemporary experience is at a new stage of historical and evolutionary development. More developmental stages are to come. Within this context, we must keep in mind that Christianity has a mission, it is not merely a message. That being the case, Western Christianity may need to recognize divergent conceptualizations of the God in which Christians believe. That is to say, future conceptions need not be confined to the God of Western philosophical metaphysics. The Western Reformation tried to integrate experience and the post-medieval understanding of God — but actually failed. Secularism gained the advantage. In the contemporary context of modern industrial and technological society Christianity is often perceived as in conflict with the sciences. A technological, as opposed to a philosophic culture, defines and determines the contemporary Western experience through which the scientific consciousness of modern humanity creates itself. [54]

[52] P. 289
[53] P. 292
[54] When Dewart wrote the internet and a digitalized culture were not yet on the scene. I view his remarks as a precursor to posthumanity.

To date, psychology, as a soft science with its strong subjective component, excludes traditional Christian understanding and has influenced (interpreted) the definition of humanity more than any hard science. As religious humans "come of age" they need not be alienated from creation as classical philosophy sometimes indicates. As religious humanity rejects its fear of the future it will re-organize its self-understanding and its concept of God. A re-organized self-understanding and re-organized concept of God necessarily touch on the theory of dogmatic development within the church which is more properly theology than philosophy. Dewart notes that unfortunately contemporary Western philosophy promotes an obsolete mode of thought according to some contemporary thinkers and is thus subsequently discounted as a serious underpinning for theology. A re-organization in thinking, in order to be valued by theologians, will require that scientific interpretation become philosophically meaningful. That is to say that philosophy must probe into humanity's self-understanding existentially, and theology must probe into humanity's being transcendentally. Such probing changes theistic belief.

Theistic belief will have a future role, but it will be a changed role within the evolution of humanity. To determine that new role, one must decide to believe and dis-believe in God. One must re-cast and understand religion as a cultural phenomenon reflecting a new fundamental attitude towards reality, regardless of the specific content of the religious belief system. In other words think in a posthuman manner.

Christian belief in God (faith) results in an act of existential self-relation towards ultimate reality which is disclosed in lived experience, according to Dewart. Hence it is a way of life. Ultimate reality, Dewart suggests, is reality beyond the totality of being, although being is real but concretely and specifically so. In short, all being is of the order of reality, but not all reality is of the order of being. From a perspective of the future of belief this understanding requires not an *act* of faith but a *life* of faith. This means that the Christian life is both a life of belief and dis-belief. Humans are conscious beings who somehow reach outside of themselves (such a reach, infrahuman animals lack) which makes humans capable of transcendence. That reach, however, does not prevent existential religious experience from following the same rules as all human experience. The following quote from Dewart as re-written in the first person illustrates the point.

> My transcendence, which is the nature of my consciousness, and my radical distinction from the animal, would be mistakenly expressed in the formula 'I not only know, but know that I know.' For the point is not that I can know beings other than myself, but can *also* be an object of knowledge for myself. It is not that I can 'reflect,' that is, make my own (previous) act of knowledge the object of a (new) act of knowledge, and thus know that I am a knower. The point is that in the very act of knowing an object (whether a being other than myself, or the being which is myself) I become present to myself. [55]

Dewart believes, by becoming present to ourselves we consciously specify our difference from mere animality.

"Dogmatic formulae and concepts do not mediate between faith and its object: they express faith in its object, God," Dewart says. [56] Infallibility is the minimum requirement of dogma, not of its philosophy. Catholic theology today needs a creative philosophy to express this lack of mediation between faith and its object, God. In failing to acquire such an agency Dewart suggests that Catholic theology has turned to non-scholastic disciplines to answer its needs where faith is not required to uphold philosophy. Where faith upholds philosophy, faith is more of a hindrance than a help, and perhaps such an upheld philosophy should be abandoned. However, the reverse is acceptable. Philosophy supports the faith and preserves it from credulity.

Traditionally the problem of God is considered in philosophical abstraction from God's nature which cannot be expressed. However, considering God as *presence* that is true would constitute a Christian philosophy, not abstractly understood, but existentially experienced. Christian theology would then attain to truth through individual and cultural self-consciousness. The more conscious of the "self" one is, the more one approaches the truth, Dewart notes. Divine transcendence, the image of which humanity reflects, is traditionally called the "uncreatedness of God." Divine transcendence does not have meaning for itself, but has meaning for us. This problem, of touching on divine presence, is largely a problem of theological consciousness. Since nature does not have its own finalities independently of God's finalities, we need to devise new ways of speaking about

[55] p. 81
[56] P. 115

God (but not non-human ways). We need only change our human concepts of God. Experience requires that we dis-believe in a divine being who is different only in degree from the primitive deities of mythology or the God of the philosophers. The future of belief might be illustrated by the practical point of worship as considered within a new understanding as Dewart suggests. "Worship might be better understood as the rendering of ourselves present to the presence of God, whether in the interior prayer which sends no message to God but which receives his presence, or in public and common ceremonies which visibly, audibly and sensibly unite us through our collective presence to each other in the presence of the present God." [57]

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THE FOUNDATIONS OF BELIEF (1969)

This study is specialized according to Dewart and intended for professional academics. Any progressive development of social structure for a community to be human must contain some form of religion integrated into its experience. Catholicity, as opposed to Catholicism, is the contemporary call to contribute to the religious development of the human race. Christianity must make itself worthy of undertaking this role. It is possible that no other faith may be in a position to do so. As part of this role, Catholicity incorporates dehellenization, a positive re-assessment of Western philosophy supporting the faith. Dehellenization opens Christianity to the "higher religions" of the East. Christian philosophical thought ought to advance beyond Hellenic metaphysics and become meta-metaphysical. Becoming meta-metaphysical does not designate a new epistemological system. Rather, the issue of becoming meta-metaphysical indicates how humanity will "self-direct" its evolution of religious belief and leave behind the Hellenistic metaphysical formulations.

The Christian community has a responsibility to promote the development of its doctrine and dogma. History shows that Christianity possess no natural theology, nor philosophy of its own.

[57] p. 206

Rather, the subject of theology is revealed as God, thus is supernatural in origin. [58] Phenomenological philosophy has changed some of the Christian belief but not all. Dewart is concerned by what has, and has not, yet been changed. The phenomenological philosophy of consciousness, not a philosophical epistemology, has occasioned this change. Contemporary consciousness, not classical idealism, may be viewed as an alternative epistemology, in Dewart's perspective. "To know" and "to love" determine the limits within which human religious consciousness can expand, according to Dewart. In this context of the expansion of consciousness an understanding of what alternative foundations are needed for planning the future of belief must be considered. In this perspective the reshaping of the future is but the analysis of the past.

Dewart's thought occurs within the Western philosophical "turn to subjectivity" that has been occurring since the Middle Ages. That is, humans are seen as no longer as static entities, but persons in time. Yet, to conceive objectivity vs subjectivity as a dichotomy to be overcome is not the problem here. The problem is the relationship between objectivity and subjectivity. Neither the classical, nor any revised understanding of the faith that amounts to modified scholasticism, is satisfactory for redeveloping Christian faith, according to Dewart. Satisfactory re-development must continue dehellenization. An incomplete dehellenization, that is, the lack of conscious understanding and, the retention of a Hellenistic philosophical perspective accounts for our present situation. Humanity can abandon its classical (Hellenistic) knowledge base as a way of relating itself to reality and employ consciousness instead. Hellenization has permanently changed Christian culture as well as the understanding of truth. However, Hellenic philosophical concepts need no longer continue to dominate.

To create the future is to transcend the past, according to Dewart. Christian culture, to date, has failed to begin this process since much of the development of Western culture has taken place in the absence of the consciousness of Christian belief. It is an accepted truism that the form of philosophical reasoning is influenced by the structure of the language in which the thinking is

[58] One might call to mind here the attitude of John Huss (1369-1415) as put forth by Brian Gaybba. "The central idea around which [Huss's] exposition [of theology] turns, is that theology or *sacra scriptura* is a wisdom originating indeed from God but one that flows only into the minds of those whose hearts are open to God's action. Hence he begins with a lengthy examination of the text 'if you lack wisdom, seek it from God (James 1:5).'" *God's Wisdom and Human Reason* 1998 University of South Africa Press (p.68)

done. All thought systems relate humanity to reality and, the way Westerners think is often assumed as the way for all humanity. Having knowledge of a thing does not mean that our knowledge corresponds to any concrete reality outside the mind. Concrete reality has its existence independently of the mind. Traditionally, concrete creatures depend on God because once having received their reality, which is not necessary, they remain dependent even after it has been received. This traditional view means that concrete reality continues to exist only because it is thought by some human or divine mind. Alternatively, Dewart suggests that human reality involves a possible "co-creator" status realized within human experience. He notes that:

> When Christian philosophers begin to tell people, as St. Thomas did, that they exist in their own right, and give them the premises from which they will in time deduce that they, too, are creators, and that they have a decisive role to play — for better or for worse — in the shaping of themselves, and that it is better to have creatively attempted something and failed than never to have created anything at all, one has to expect that some people — perhaps even most people for a while — will not know just what to do with their discovery and will not quite manage themselves well. But *ars essendi longa, vita hominis brevis*. A little atheistic wild oats, a little experimental apostasy, may not be such a bad thing in the end, if only the Christian would learn to profit, even from them. [59]

Classical knowledge introduces a dichotomy into what was originally indeed a unity and undifferentiated, according to Dewart. To the contrary, phenomenological knowledge is the possibility of subjectivity (consciousness) appearing in the world by the knowing subject's own self-differentiation from the world of concrete reality from within which human identity emerges. Truth is the quality of human consciousness which impels knowledge to go beyond itself to the ultimate degree. Humans continue to evolve (emerge) from who they are at present. However, the current evolutionary process is different from the previous process that moved from infrahuman to human. The differences are: 1) in the heightening, deepening or expansion of humanity's self-understanding and, 2) that human evolution is beginning to enter a self-directed stage, and made purposeful.

[59] p. 206

It is truly distinctive that humanity is to relate itself to itself through experience interpreted phenomenologically. Like classical philosophy, phenomenology has identified reality with being, according the Dewart, since being is what appears. However, philosophy is called to transcend all philosophical metaphysics he suggests and, if being and reality are not the same, then philosophy need not be solely ontological in its nature, but also existential. Thus, the questions arise; What is the nature of thought beyond metaphysics? Could it be in consciousness? Could that be why the history of philosophy is the progress of human thought? The evolution of thought takes place within the deepening, heightening or expansion of human consciousness. Therefore, creative evolution, one may argue, replaces any *status quo* philosophy has as determining the future. From a theological perspective within creative evolution we are consulted concerning the gift of "new" life God gives us. Unlike the "old" life which was just given to us without consultation.

Does the analysis of creative evolutionary religious experience reveal a reality which transcends being? Dewart thinks so. He suggests, reality is that within which one's self is differentiated. Reality is being that is "not-me." He suggests that reality is different than what traditional Western philosophers and common sense say it is. Reality is not something out of which the self is made. In short, it is consciousness that makes the self. It is that relationship between "me" and the "not-me" of human experience. Reality is that aptitude for being related, that is, whatever the self can have relations with constitutes reality. Reality is not given in an act of being. It is not non-being, not no-thing, not un-being. The way for humans to relate themselves to reality (i.e., become conscious) is a philosophical unknown. A current Catholic philosophical concept of faith separates secular experience from religious experience. One can have faith only in a religious experience. However, religious experience gives meaning to all experience, as Dewart argues in this book. Ordinary human experience is insufficient unless it extends itself into a new extraordinary (religious) dimension. Faith becomes the transcendent consciousness of that which already unknowingly exists, as it were. Faith, unlike ordinary consciousness, relates us to a situation not of our own making or doing. Faith is to be understood as participating in (as an agent) rather than reduplicating (knowingly so) reality. Such understanding cannot be cast in the Hellenic terms of understanding.

The initiative of bringing things into being and reality, as we experience it, lies elsewhere than in ourselves. In short, we did not create our being. We became somehow conscious of "already being in progress" without knowledge of our origin. This self-conscious "absent-mindedness" specifically defines the essence of human existence as essentially religious. [60] Humans follow through, however, with belief or unbelief given their experience. Faith is a commitment to conceive oneself in the light of a reality that transcends one's own transcendence. Thus, divinity reveals itself to humanity, by revealing humanity to itself. Divinity's reality is not like the concrete reality (being) that appears to humanity from outside humanity. Divinity vivifies from within. In moving towards, or becoming conscious of divinity (being impelled towards divinity), humanity has never ceased to evolve and probably never will cease evolving. Dewart explains: "I have in this book suggested why the confusion of reality with being and, above all, the identification of reality as being, is invalid and particularly inadequate as a possible philosophical foundation for Christian theism today. … The reconceptualization of reality in a more adequate manner than metaphysics allows can be grounded only upon an epistemology which would depart from the very roots of Hellenic-Western metaphysical thought." [61] Such is the foundation of belief.

[60] By "absent-mindedness" Dewart means that humans have no awareness of mind (consciousness) of their origin.
[61] p. 522

ON GEORGE TYRRELL

What He said He Said in the Prefaces of His Books

Historical Note: Florence M. Greenfield (1996) *Round and About Old Storrington* Littlehampton Printers.

George Tyrrell, a Jesuit priest ultimately expelled from the Society, was a convert who lived from 1861 to 1909. He was of Irish descent and a theologian and scholar associated with the so-called Modernist Movement. His efforts up-dating and adapting Catholic theology within the context of modern ideas made him a controversial figure within the Catholic Church of the late 19th century.

A well-known figure who stayed at the Monastery [Our Lady of England Priory, Norbertine Fathers] for a time was Father George Tyrrell. He spent his last years at Storrington, first with the Monks, but soon moving to Mulberry House in the Square, the home of Miss Petre. In the grounds was a hay-store and garden-room which Miss Petre turned into living accommodation for him. Here he continued his controversial writings, and wrote his last work, "Christianity at the Crossroads." This small house has since been enlarged and is now an attractive residence called "Malt Cottage."

Father Tyrrell was born in 1861 in Ireland. He was a Protestant but, influenced by the writings of Cardinal Newman, he was received into the Roman Catholic Communion at the age of 18 and became a Jesuit. He was an able writer and a great thinker; in fact it was said of him that he was "the finest intellect among English Jesuits since the Reformation." But his fearless modernist views led him into conflict with his Church. In 1906 he was expelled from the Society of Jesus. In the following year he was excommunicated, although he persisted in his adherence to the Church of Rome. He died in 1909, still in communion with Rome. He was buried in Storrington parish churchyard, in a grave which still attracts pilgrims, for it is generally accepted that, far from being mistaken in his outlook and beliefs, he was merely many years in advance of his time.

Father Tyrrell's headstone, and that of Arthur Bell beside it, are examples of the early work of Eric Gill, who became a sculptor and letter-carver of international repute and whose work can be seen in Westminster Cathedral, in Broadcasting House, in the League of Nations Palace at Geneva and in the New Museum at Jerusalem.

ARTHUR F. BELL: Another writer whom old Storrington people remember was Arthur F. Bell. He was born in 1875 and spent most of his life in Sussex. His last years were spent in Storrington at The Studio, Manley's Hill, where he died in November 1918. Owing to an accident when he was a baby, he was crippled all his life, and got about either on crutches or in a bath-chair, or in a little pony-cart. He was a poet and writer, and an artist of some talent. He was a keen lover of nature and of cricket, but his disability barred him from any form of activity. Many of his Sussex poems are contained in "The Dear Land of the Heart," published in 1913. He is buried in Storrington churchyard beside his friend Father Tyrrell.

In the same plot, enclosed by a privet hedge, is a little headstone recording the burial in 1942 of Miss Maude Petre, a great friend of these two men.

George Tyrrell

Tyrrell's Grave Site at Storrington in 2000

Introduction

In the Introduction to her book, *Letters from a "Modernist,"* Mary Jo Weaver offers advice on how to approach Tyrrell's letters. She encourages the reader to overcome the temptation to follow theories written by others about Tyrrell and suggests that "we ought to search Tyrrell himself for an understanding." [62] I agree with her advice. Through the Prefaces and Introductions to his books, considered chronologically, I searched Tyrrell's thought for a demonstration of his meditative and contemplative character from which originated his creative and insightful understanding, which in turn changed my theological thinking.

It is unfortunate that at this time in the development of religious ideas, in the Western context at least, the place of philosophy in relation to theology seems to have been usurped to a great degree by sociology and psychology. But Brian Gaybba sees the possibility of a conscious philosophical development.

> Clearly there is still a long way to go and much we need to learn about ourselves, our experiences of the divine, the way in which our hearts and heads interact both within the individual and society. But in learning those lessons we should remember not to jettison the insights bequeathed to us by our Christian forebears, for however strange the packaging of those insights may be to us today, the insights themselves are of enduring value. [63]

And I am sure that contemporary theologians are the poorer for it. That having been said, it is my hope that those readers who are not philosophically inclined, but favour sociology and psychology, should they persevere with a philosophical quest will discover insights in themselves not previously realized.

Many contemporary Western theologians are in the process of rethinking the role of theology in the public square and its subsequent influence in secular society. Religious and spiritual ideas are often perceived as publicly needless, although they may be accepted as privately necessary. To my mind, theology as a post-Vatican II discipline is able to serve as a means whereby religious and

[62] 1981 Patmos (p. xvii)
[63] *God's Wisdom and Human Reason* 1998 University of South Africa Press (p. 92)

spiritual ideas may be expressed in the public square, without offence to its secular status. Admittedly, theological thinking can serve as cause for political division, fragmentation and disintegration within a society, thus giving offence to believer and non-believer alike. But this would be an aberration in theology's public intent.

Today, many theologians are seeking to make sense of the personal and, not necessarily private experience of the believer outside the official church community. And making sense of the believer's experience is often rendered through narrative terms, that is, through the telling of one's personal story of belief or faith commitment. Many theologians have their own story to tell, such as the convert George Tyrrell.

In his day, and within his particular intellectual climate, George Tyrrell attempted to understand the human story through his own narrative of the experience and understanding of revelation. Being a theologian, his preoccupation with revelation and the religious narrative became a primary focus in his life. His theological legacy has its roots in the Roman Catholic theological views that were in vogue in the early 20th century. Tyrrell's way of thinking reflects the beginning of an early ecumenical model of discursive theologizing rather than the conventional model of polemical theologizing current at the time. On one occasion he admits as much about his seemingly aimless ideas as noted by Percy Gardner below. It is in his model of discursive theologizing, I suggest, that one finds Tyrrell's creative and insightful contributions to the understanding of faith which may enlighten the faith of others.

I draw the reader's attention to the fact that many creative and insightful contributions from theologians are quoted and discussed by professional academics, as well as the educated public. These academics and the educated public truly believe they have understood and correctly expounded the ideas of insightful and innovative theologians. And in most cases, they probably have done so, but not always. To my mind, George Tyrrell's story of creative and innovative theologizing is a case in point. To my mind, and in hindsight, the appreciation of the how and why of his style of thinking is not as well understood as it could be among those seeking religious and spiritual enlightenment. A majority of academics and reviewers discuss Tyrrell from an historical perspective within the (so-called) Modernist Crisis in the Roman Catholic Church. The extensive

bibliographies in the books of M. J. Weaver and D. Wells on George Tyrrell's life and thought support this observation. [64] David Schultenover, however, focuses on a different historical understanding than that of the conventional one. Schultenover writes of Tyrrell's way of thinking that "…its genre is intellectual history as distinguished from institutional history…[and] it aims to describe not the 'modernist movement' but the intellectual development of a major contributor to the 'movement' by focusing on the man as the key to his thought." [65] Accordingly, I focus on Tyrrell's philosophical and theological thought as stated in the Prefaces of his books.

In the Preface of a book the author often *says what he said he said* in developing the main thrust of an argument, or presentation of a purpose. So, I suggest that through a critical reading of the Prefaces of George Tyrrell's books, readers may encounter a personality whose ideas they may come to appreciate and whose personal characteristics may endear him to them. To my mind, readers can discover Tyrrell's intellectually meditative character by pondering over the Prefaces of his books. A brief synopsis of the particular intellectual climate of his day will help readers in appreciating the context which contributed to his particular meditative character.

Particular Intellectual Influences

Tyrrell lived "at a time when religion seemed fated to be submerged and undermined by the vast torrent of secular knowledge that was sweeping over the intellectual world." [66] This torrent of secular knowledge threatened to discount any intellectual meditative approach to religious experience. This threat was common to the intellectual worlds of the British Isles and the Continent. David Wells notes that Tyrrell displayed in his writings an Irish heart but he had a German mind which characterized him as straddling both worlds. Mary Green suggests that in Tyrrell's day "Catholic religious thought had not kept pace with English religious thought in general, whether sound or poor, nor with Catholic and general religious thought in most countries on the Continent." [67] Of German intellectual meditative thinking, which influenced Tyrrell

[64] Mary Jo Weaver 1981 *Letters from a Modernist*, Patmos. and David Wells 1981 *The Prophetic Theology of George Tyrrell* Scholars Press
[65] David Schultenover 1981 *George Tyrrell: In Search of Catholicism* (p. vii)
[66] Lewis May 1932 *Father Tyrrell and the Modernist Movement* Eyre & Spottiswoode (p. 9)
[67] Mary Green 1978 "George Tyrrell: The Modernist as Spiritual Director" PhD thesis Saint Louis University UMI Dissertation Services (p. 28)

somewhat, Joseph Gostwick notes that it had as its source earnest religious feelings which endeavoured to attain a unity of thought that could never be the result of knowledge founded on logical understanding alone. The development that Gostwick observed, was that "the 'rights' of intuition and immediate feeling — these rights so long suppressed under the tyranny of logic — were now allowed to be as valid as the conclusions of reasoning processes." [68] Such validation nourished Tyrrell's intellectually meditative character. In addition, "The Programme of Modernism," identified by the encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* of Pius X, provided a focus for Tyrrell's provocative thinking.

The philosophical system known as Scholasticism is a product of its own age and time. Tyrrell recognized that the synthesis it provided no longer met the needs of the modern and scientific age. He probed into religious experience and, with the aid of critical thinking, desired to express his intellectual meditative understanding in a new frame of reference. In Leslie Lilley's words Tyrrell could "no longer accept a demonstration of God supported by those 'idols of the tribe' – the Aristotelian conceptions of motion, of causality, of contingency, of finality."[69] Percy Gardner suggests that some knowledge of Hegel's dialectical philosophy would help in understanding the context of Tyrrell's thinking. Gardner quotes Tyrrell as saying, "The process through which I have reached my present position will appear as a wavering, rather than a straight line, a result that should facilitate the critic's task." [70] As well, Bernard Reardon throughout his book acknowledges Hegel's influence on Tyrrell's thought. [71] A contemporary of Tyrrell, Hakluyt Egerton, (pseudonym for Arthur Boutwood), alludes to the meditative aspect of Tyrrell's thinking. When Tyrrell speaks of "Divine Immanence," Egerton does not believe that Tyrrell means Pantheism, the doctrine that God is the substance of all finite particulars. Rather, Egerton writes, "Undoubtedly Father Tyrrell believes that God is *in* man — although by way of mere indwelling, or as a part of man's composite nature, is not clear [Egerton's italics"]. [72] Egerton also notes that when Tyrrell

[68] Joseph Gostwick 1882 *German Culture and Christianity: Their Controversy in the Time 1770-1880* Norgate (p. 397)
[69] Leslie Lilley 1909 *The Programme of Modernism: A Reply to the Encyclical of Pius X, Pascendi Dominici Gregis* Fisher Unwin (p. 124)
[70] Percy Gardner 1926 *Modernism in the English Church* Methuen (p. 49)
[71] Bernad Reardon 1970 *Roman Catholic Modernism* Adams & Charles Black
[72] Hakluyt Egerton 1909 *Father Tyrrell's Modernism: An Expository Criticism of 'Through Scylla and Charybdis' in an Open Letter to Mr. Athelstan Riley* Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner (p.199)

distinguishes an ordinary experience of religion from an experience of revelation, he does not refer to the objective source of the experience but refers to the experience itself by a description of its "subjective" character, that is, to its character as a psychological happening. According to Maude Petre, in a lecture entitled, "Revelation and Experience," Tyrrell wrote a response to Egerton in which he sets forth this distinction: "Faith and knowledge cannot be confronted, because their realms are not the same." [73]

These, then, are some of the particular intellectual influences in and through which Tyrrell thought and wrote and which shaped his character. They also gave rise to a distinctive approach to theology which is evident in his thinking throughout his thirteen books. I now turn to the Prefaces of those books.

Tyrrell's Works

i) 1900 *Nova et Vetera: Informal Meditations*

The Preface to this book was written in 1897. Tyrrell presents these meditations informally and leaves the reader to supply any practical applications deemed necessary. The wisdom which arises within meditation is often hidden from the clever and prudent and revealed to little ones. Such wisdom "does not leave them as it finds them in their ignorance and littleness" but rather gives them understanding, he says. In Maude Petre's assessment of this book she writes:

> The influence of this book can best be understood through a knowledge of the class of mind and soul to which it was primarily addressed. It was not written (or preached) mainly for the outside world; but rather for Catholics, and for Catholics earnest in the spiritual life. Many such had been trained to accept as inevitable a certain systematised form of prayer…and to many silent suffers in convents, but not convents only, the informal meditations of 'Nova et Vetera' came as a breath of fresh air into a close room.[74]

[73] Maude Petre 1912 *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell* Arnold Vol. 2 (p.360)
[74] Ibid., vol. 2 (pp. 62-64)

These meditations are not presented in any particular order since Tyrrell saw no specific advantage to be gained by logical classification. He records them as they occurred from time to time, spontaneously and unsought after, and in no way as parts of a whole. He cautions the reader to be aware of the way understanding is expressed by those within the Church and those outside the Church. The intent may not be the same even though the vocabulary is identical. Despite the human emphasis in these meditations, Tyrrell assures his readers that "no one will be likely to find fault with them as neglecting to give due emphasis to the Divinity of our Saviour and to the mystical aspect of Catholic Christianity." He concludes the Preface by stating that the purpose of the book is to start the spiritual stream running where it has gone dry.

ii) 1901 *External Religion: Its Use and Abuse*

In this book, Tyrrell directs his lectures towards practice rather than speculation. He acknowledges that the Catholic and Protestant religion are animated by the same spirit that characterizes the whole of religious experience. Practice is to be preferred to theory in pastoral interpretation. This is so since there is potential for abuse in addressing controversial issues when individuals theoretically "first fix their beliefs, and then fabricate reasons in support of them." By practising one's beliefs one achieves a better understanding than by speculating about them. We are reminded that religion is an experiential interpretation of our in-born instincts and appetites, originally known unconsciously, but which are brought to our consciousness by Christ. In this book Tyrrell is writing with the British public in mind and his intent is to "let Truth appear, and then bid men, 'Come and see!' And of these, some will remain and some will go away, according to the power of seeing they bring with them." Whatever manner the individual employs to apprehend the truth that manner must be susceptible to the understanding of others.

iii) 1902 *The Faith of the Millions* (First Series Chapters I – XII; Second Series Chapters XIII – XXII)

In the Preface to this book of meditations Tyrrell acknowledges the difference between English and Continental Catholicism. This means that these meditations may be understood from a different theological perspective by English and Continental readers. However, what English and Continental Catholicism share in common is that "religion must not only satisfy and equal [felt needs], but must transcend and promise to expand indefinitely man's higher spiritual capacities."

Through the interpretation of Christ's teachings in this collection of meditations Tyrrell has come to realize that ignorance is less an obstacle to enlightened understanding than false learning and mental deficiencies are obstacles to enlightened understanding Regarding the faith (of the millions), his understanding is that Christianity is not added to "complete" human nature rather Christianity is inherent in human nature.

iv) 1903 *The Church and the Future*

Maude Petre wrote the following words in the Introduction to the 1910 edition of this book, which lacks a proper Preface.

> 'In my own inward history this book ends a painful process of necessary readjustment, and I feel as one who, after much uncertainty, has at last chosen a path that is clear, however difficult and uninviting in many ways.' Thus Father Tyrrell wrote to a friend on June 27th, 1903, in regard to *The Church and the Future*, which he had printed privately under the pseudonym Hilaire Bourdon, and which was being circulated with great reserve and discretion. There was, during his literary career, a short period during which it was necessary that his advice to those in need should be anonymous or pseudonymous.

As well, in her *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, she reproduces a letter Tyrrell wrote to Baron von Hügel in 1903 about a book he intended to call, *Catholicism Re-visited*. [75] Tyrrell wrote:

> I regard the 'Catholicising of Christianity' as a *per se* result of the Spirit of Christ, and not as a perversion or accident; but I perceive in that 'Catholicising' process (as in the scriptures) a divine and a human, an inspired and an uninspired element; and I apply the *quod semper*, etc. test in a *practical* way *sc*, beliefs and institutions which are proved, experimentally, to foster the Christian spirit, *ipso facto*, are proved to be true to that spirit. And by the Christian spirit I mean that spirit which spoke from the beginning in the prophets and men of faith, and found its most docile organ in Christ, and which still speaks in the corporate life of the Church, so far as holiness is found there, *i.e*., I make the Saints and not the theologians the teachers of Christianity. The Spirit of Christ rather than Christ Himself is the creator of the

[75] Maude Petre 1912 *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell* Arnold, Vol. 2 (p. 187)

> Church — or rather of the whole organism of the pre- and post-Christian Church of which Christ is the bond, and of which no part, not even Christ, exhausts the possibilities.

v) 1903 *Lex Orandi or Prayer and Creed*

This book developed from an essay intended for private circulation, with the title 'Religion as a Factor of Life' under the pseudonym Dr. Ernest Engels. [76] Tyrrell assumes, in this work, that our spiritual nature develops within our religious sense which "furnishes an experimental criterion of belief." In the human spirit there is a longing for the transcendent God, a longing that can never be satisfied. This bitter truth arises from experience. It is a difference in kind, not in degree, which leads to a life of solid value. He writes: "That we are dissatisfied, not only with what the Ideal gives us, but, by anticipation, with all it could ever possibly give us is proof that there is a higher love-power within us which must seek its object elsewhere." Tyrrell notes that one who seeks after that which is divine in life, "may give himself to God's work, God's will, God's cause, and yet not give himself to God." Tyrrell acknowledges an Augustinian perspective in his thinking and remarks that the finite is transfigured by an illuminating grace, encountered in experience.

vi) 1904 *Hard Sayings: A Selection of Meditations and Studies*

Tyrrell wrote the Introduction to this book in 1898. He assembled this group of meditations with the hope that "the unity of their effect" would be felt upon the reader's mind. These meditations and conferences were written at various times over a number of years. Maude Petre describes this text as "clear proof and expression of the militantly orthodox phase through which he passed." [77] In writing these meditations and studies he attempted to counter an excessive rationalizing of the principles of Catholic Christianity. He makes no claim to have succeeded. He reminds the reader that these meditations "will serve to bring to our mind all the meaning and expression of a face if only it be already familiar to us by experience." Maude Petre's assessment of Tyrrell's effort reads: "The first object of these pages is, then, to make Catholics 'appropriate' that which they often content themselves to hold by mere inheritance." [78] Where one meditation may be weak another

[76] Ibid. Vol. 2 (p.176)
[77] Ibid. Vol. 2 (p. 61)
[78] Ibid. Vol. 2 (p. 66)

may be strong, says Tyrrell, but some image of the whole truth may shape itself in the mind of the spiritual pilgrim. He cautions against a narrow rationalism that would lead the seeker of wisdom "to apply the methods and criteria of the 'exact sciences' to matters of a wholly different order, to be abhorrent of all that savours of mysticism." Ultimate truths, concerned with the beginning and end of our existence, are set at the limit of our intellectual horizon yet our minds are made for understanding what lies between the beginning and end of our existence. That is, we are made in order to understand the movements and processes that disclose these ultimate truths framing the beginning and end of our existence. It is not our human need that determines our faith in God, but rather, what God has done in Christ out of love for us that determines our faith in God, Tyrrell says.

Tyrrell warns that if true religion does not feed the mind's craving for the mysterious, the wonderful, the supernatural, then the mind will feed "on the garbage of any superstition that is offered it." But this is false mysticism, or self-delusion, and "no more discredits the true mysticism of à Kempis or of St Teresa, than spiritualism discredits spirits or jugglery discredits the miracles of Christ."

Reason is to help us in spiritual matters encountered in the mutable circumstances of human life. The collection of meditations in *Hard Sayings* is to be understood as a type of *disciplina arcani* based on Jesus' parables which for those who could not understand "would have been only to their ruin and not their resurrection," says Tyrrell. He shares with us a truth that he has come to realize. That is, the human heart is moved by the ethical conceptions of the Catholic religion. That religion embraces

> the clear conviction that she alone knows what is in man, and holds the secrets of life's problems; that she alone has balm for the healing of the nations; that she alone can answer firmly and infallibly what all are asking, with an answer harsh at first sounding, and austere, but on reflection kind and consolatory, and, like the 'hard sayings' of her Master, 'full of grace and truth.'

vii) 1906 *A Much Abused Letter*

Originally, Tyrrell did not intend to make this letter public. However, he justifies its public presentation due to altered circumstances and says, "I am convinced that such a course will remove far more scandal than it will cause." In the Introduction he explains his reasons for changing his mind. They are: 1) that the letter in question is founded on ideas written two or three years earlier, 2) that the letter can only be judged in light of its original context, not read in extracts, 3) that parts of the published letter were not written by him but he does agree with their contents. These parts, he maintains, resulted from adaptation to local circumstances.

viii) 1906 *Lex Credendi: A Sequel to Lex Orandi*

Lex Credendi was intended as a "practical devotion" or pastoral theology and only secondarily as speculative theology. It is the purpose of theology to comment on revelation. Tyrrell acknowledged that the "heart has its reasons" but it also has its language. There is need to have some kind of dogmatic conception for religious expression, but at the same time in Tyrrell's mind, the church is not a school to translate prophecy into the exact language of thought. Rather, prophetic language must be universal. Of this book Tyrrell writes: "It is not then directly as an expression of my own private judgment and spiritual orientation that I say the *Credo*, but as .an expression of the Church's collective Faith, which I desire to share and appropriate, and which I acknowledge as a rule or norm." It is the substance of the Creed, not its form that Tyrrell shares with us in this work. He seeks to share an experience of the Giver, not the gift; an experience of the spirit of Christ, not the teachings of Christianity; an experience of a full life rather than the implications of a Christian life.

ix) 1907 *Oil and Wine*

In this book Tyrrell acknowledged writing as one seeking the truth "not from on high, as a teacher, but as an inquirer on the same platform as my readers," and as one who is just as blind as they. He has faith that the Spirit of Truth and Righteousness gradually reveals itself to the seeker of wisdom and works out its fuller manifestation in the community, and not in the individual. Spiritual progress comes with many a personal rude awakening, and "it is not 'private judgment' if, when it has irresistibly declared itself, we prefer the sovereign and most universal to any subordinate rule or ruler." Of the Christ revealed in the Gospel, Tyrrell believed: "His spirit is not so

concentrated and confined in the institutional church as not to be also diffused throughout Christendom and throughout humanity, where faith may often be found of a kind unknown in Israel." Concerning his thoughts in this book, Tyrrell remarks that as unauthorized as they may be these "manifestations of the word" are offered as oil and wine to bind up the wounds of the "half-murdered wayfarer." They are not offered as the "oil of consolation and the wine of spiritual stimulus."

x) 1907 *Through Scylla and Charybdis or the Old Theology and the New*

In this Preface Tyrrell expresses the hope that other individuals, more skilled than himself, once the controversy over his ideas has subsided "may perhaps take them up and turn them to better account." Of these individuals Tyrrell writes: "We cannot sift them out from the mass, but there is always a minority, a saving leaven, whose judgment is in truth the judgment of God, and before whom we stand as before an invisible eye that watches and judges, condemns and acquits."

xi) 1909 *Medievalism: A Reply to Cardinal Mercier*

This book lacks a Preface or Introduction. However, a Foreword for the book has been written by Gabriel Daly. He provides an historical and doctrinal perspective of the issues and the intellectual climate of the time that influenced Tyrrell's thinking. Daly understands this book to be "a faithful reflection of [Tyrrell's] most typical attitudes and convictions."

xii) 1909 *Christianity at the Crossroads*

The Foreword of this book was written by Alex Vidlar, the Introduction by Maude Petre and the Preface by Tyrrell. Vidlar notes that those who were influenced by Tyrrell acknowledged that "they had found that he had a rare gift for interpreting the Christian faith and for illuminating the spiritual life." Maude Petre speaks of Tyrrell's peace of soul, his undisturbed friendship, study, prayer and character which were true goods in his life. He was not ambitious for fame or notoriety. He did not seek controversy but rather sought a calm understanding of controversial issues.

Tyrrell hoped for a synthesis between the essentials of Christianity and the scientific criticism current in the theological debates among the so-called Modernists. He noted that scientific truth and religious truth must each be examined by the principles of their respective disciplines. When

he attempted this synthesis, he realized that the discord initially caused was much less than expected. According to Maude Petre this book is a calm "examination of the value of this life, a study of its relation to the next."

xiii) 1914 *Essays on Faith and Immortality*

This book was published by Maude Petre after Tyrrell's death. She wrote in the Introduction that Tyrrell possessed a "strange self-detachment" that fitted him for addressing "a problem which some of us can hardly endure to face." She arranged these essays in light of Tyrrell's intention of addressing the problem of faith and immortality. About these essays she wrote: They "will serve their purpose if they do what their author was always satisfied to do, namely to give the lead to some other mind which can carry the search a little further."

BOOK REVIEWS on TYRRELL

WEAVER, Mary Jo 1981 (ed.) *Letters from a Modernist: The Letters of George Tyrrell to Wilfrid Ward, 1893-1908* Patmos Press.

To Tyrrell's letters Weaver has written annotations which are exceptionally detailed and prove, to my way of thinking, to be the most valuable part of this book for the historian and anyone interested in specifics of the relationship between Tyrrell and Ward. In her introduction she says that the demise of the relationship between Tyrrell and Ward "helps us to understand more clearly why late nineteenth century Catholic intellectuals were drawn to one another and to a common dream of a more expansive church" (p. xiii). Her presentation acknowledges Newman's role in the Modernist controversy as reflected through Tyrrell's correspondence. This book is an enlightening chronicle, albeit a one-sided chronicle, since Ward's letters are no longer extant. However, while I was left informed by Tyrrell's letters as presented by Weaver I was not as passionately moved by this book as I have been by other books on Tyrrell. Nevertheless, Weaver allows Tyrrell's letters to speak for themselves without any annoying overlay of opinionated interpretation. That consideration on her part is a joy in itself. Given all the material available on Tyrrell and Modernism this book is not a "must read", yet, one is poorer in choosing not to read it.

WELLS, David 1981 *Prophetic Theology of George Tyrrell* Scholars Press.

Wells says: "I have tried to develop an understanding of the theology of George Tyrrell that is historically sensitive but re-evaluated from a post-Vatican II position" (p. 4). If I have understood Wells correctly, the post-Vatican II position from which he evaluates Tyrrell is an existential one. In this exciting presentation of Tyrrell's thought Wells has succeeded in identifying the prophetic aspect of Tyrrell's character. Many scholastic investigations of the writings of significant theologians are undertaken from the perspective of the historical context or crisis that precipitated their works. Wells has managed to present an investigation that illustrates Tyrrell's historical significance and reveals his prophetic character which transcends the historical context. Wells writes: "...it needs to be said at the outset that my concern centers wholly on Tyrrell; where questions of relationship between his thought and contemporary views arise, my sole intention remains that of eliciting the proper significance of the Irish priest's ideas" (p. 5). As an

existentialist, Tyrrell wrote with the intention of finding himself and the journey of this volatile personality parallels the journeys of many of Christ's faithful today. In our age of heightened individuality, which often turns to narcissistic individualism, Tyrrell's journey into self-conscious understanding of himself and the Church, which he claims to have never left, is accurately documented by Wells. Tyrrell's individuality is that of the theologian. It is not the individualism of the philosopher. Wells is faithful to the title of his book and helps us to understand that "What is of concern is that Tyrrell's role as an almost prescient formulator of things to come be recognized" (P. 42). This is not a book which is written to address, in popular fashion, the existential angst among Christian believers today. Rather, it is a thoughtful and richly rewarding intellectual appreciation of the prophetic legacy of one who suffered through the formulation and re-formulation of his ideas for the good of the individual and of the Church. Wells, in re-evaluating Tyrrell from a post-Vatican II perspective, shows how Tyrrell's thought transcends the Victorian theological constraints of his time.

LEONARD, Ellen 1982 *George Tyrrell and the Catholic Tradition* Paulist Press.

This book came to my attention relatively late after I had begun my research and writing into the theology and life of George Tyrrell to which I was introduced in my theological studies at St Michael's College, University of Toronto. Leonard's book is an excellent introduction to the so-called Modernist Movement within the Catholic Church. As well, to my mind, she has captured Tyrrell's personality which deeply affected his theological thinking. (Regarding his theological thinking I wrote my own book on Tyrrell, *The 'Avant-garde' Theology of George Tyrrell: Its Philosophical Roots Changed my Theological Thinking*.) Even though "Modernism" as a phenomenon is waning in theological circles, much of our contemporary theological insight has its roots in the thinking of many "Modernists," Catholic and Protestant, as is acknowledged by Leonard. Her style of writing is pleasant to read, with no glossing over or misinterpreting of significant and pertinent sociological, historical and theological details. To individuals interested in the development and study of theology, to divinity students, undergraduate and graduate, and to those who might just be interested in significant personalities of an earlier period of church history, I recommend this book.

By the same author

2001 Phenomenological Understanding of Certain Liturgical Texts: The Anglican Collects for Advent and the Roman Catholic Collects for Lent [University Press of America]

2003 Faith, Hope and Charity as Character Traits in Adler's Individual Psychology with Related Essays in Spirituality and Phenomenology (Co-author: Sheldon William Nicholl, Contributor: Erik Mansager) [University Press of America]

2006 Reflections on the Interior Life: Critical Insights from William Gladstone & George Tyrrell (Co-author: George Drazenovich) [Trafford]

2007 A Contemporary Understanding of Religious Belief Within Mental Health (Foreword: Joleen Kemp) [Melrose Books]

2008 (2009) The Ecology: A 'New to You" View: An Orthodox Theological Ecology [ArtBookBindery.com/CreateSpace]

2010 Phenomenological Philosophy and Reconstruction in Western Theism (Foreword: James J. Bishop) [WestBow Press]

2011 The Catholic Faith and the Social Construction of Religion with Particular Attention to the Quebec Experience (Co-author: Peter Stuart, Foreword: Charles Coveney) [WestBow Press]

2012 (2016) The "Avant-Garde" Theology of George Tyrrell: Its Philosophical Roots Changed My Theological Thinking. [Lambert Academic Publishing/CreateSpace]

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2016 (2009) Dehellenization and Dr. Dewart Revisited: A First Person Philosophical Reflection [CreateSpace]

2017 A Future for Disbelief: Philosophy in a Dehellenized Age with Implications for Theology (Foreword: Patricia Shallow) [CreateSpace]

2017 Religion and Governance: Re–thinking the American Perspective [Lambert Academic Publishing]

2018 Faith and Queer Consciousness: Philosophical Thinking in a New Key [CreateSpace]

2019 On Posthuman Theism: "God Consciousness" and Leslie Dewart (1922-2009) [Kindle Direct Publishing]